



# Concordia Theological Monthly



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# Concordia Theological Monthly

*Published by The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod*

EDITED BY THE FACULTY OF CONCORDIA SEMINARY  
ST. LOUIS, MO.

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## CONTENTS

SEPTEMBER 1952	PAGE
"GIVE ATTENDANCE TO READING." <i>Richard R. Caemmerer</i>	625
THE NEW TESTAMENT CONCEPT OF FELLOWSHIP. <i>F. E. Mayer</i>	632
NATURAL LAW AND THE NEW TESTAMENT. <i>Robert Hoeferkamp</i>	645
HOMILETICS	669
THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER	680
BOOK REVIEW	696

*Frey, Hellmuth: Das Ziel aller Dinge. Bibelstunden über die Offenbarung Johannis. — Reu, Dr. M.: Two Treatises on the Means of Grace. — Barth, Karl: Prayer. — Bekennende Kirche. Martin Niemoeller zum 60. Geburtstag. — Doney, Jr., Edward A.: The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology. — Berkouwer, G. C. The Providence of God. — Berkouwer, G. C.: Faith and Sanctification. — Rupp, Gordon: Luther's Progress to the Diet of Worms. — Seifert, Harvey: The Church in Community Action. — Lee, Irving J.: How to Talk with People. — Luccock, Halford E.: Marching Off the Map. — Meyer, F. B.: Our Daily Homily. — Douglass, Truman B.: Mission to America. — Scherzer, Carl J.: Springs of Living Water.*

CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY is published monthly by Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis 18, Mo., to which all business correspondence is to be addressed.

\$3.00 per annum, anywhere in the world, payable in advance.

Entered at the Post Office at St. Louis, Mo., as second-class matter. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized on July 5, 1918.

PRINTED IN U. S. A.

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# Concordia Theological Monthly

VOL. XXIII

SEPTEMBER, 1952

No. 9

## "Give Attendance to Reading"

By RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

"Give attendance to reading," St. Paul exhorted Timothy. This exhortation has sometimes been applied to contemporary ministers as follows: Let them keep up their private studies, their reading of the Bible and of the many other materials which enrich their mind and ministry. That is a useful and necessary exhortation. The original intention of 1 Tim. 4:13, however, is simpler. St. Paul tells Timothy that he is to minister faithfully and vigorously to his congregation till St. Paul himself will come. This ministry means bringing the Word of God to people. That he is to do through three routes: reading the Scriptures to them, exhorting them concerning Scriptural facts, and teaching them the significance of these Scriptural facts for themselves.<sup>1</sup> This exhortation of St. Paul to Timothy has important applications for the ministry of worship in general and the ministry of preaching in particular. These applications deserve to be re-emphasized. An unbelieving or liberal attitude toward the Scriptures has weakened the centrality of the Bible in the service and the sermon. But worse: also among ministers and people who defer to the authority of the Scriptures, this centrality can give way to other elements, such as the form of worship, the customs and habits of worship, the eloquence and finesse of the preacher. Hence we propose to reassert Paul's exhortation: "Give attendance to reading."

### I

From the synagog the early Christians were familiar with the customs of reading in public worship from the sacred Scriptures. So our Lord Himself did at Nazareth, Luke 4:16-20. So St. Paul did at Antioch in Pisidia, Acts 13:15.

The Early Church continued this procedure. Some selections from the Epistles and Gospels were added. These selections were at first simply extracts read consecutively.<sup>2</sup>

Already the New Testament books indicate that the reading of the selections was followed by a discussion, which may have been at first participated in somewhat freely and unsystematically. In other instances, and generally at a later time, the leader of the service gave the comments and exhortations which stemmed from the reading.<sup>3</sup>

This procedure at once focuses our attention upon a significance to reading of the Scriptures, and preaching, in the service of the church, which is very easily forgotten. That is, that the church service is an activity in which one Christian contributes to the edifying of each other one there present, Eph. 5:18-21; Col. 3:16. This significance of the reading of the Scriptures in the service is one for every age. Whatever else be said or done in the service of worship in which Christians edify one another, the Scriptures themselves are the point of origin, the "one source and norm." They are, in the words of the ancient church, the *Archai*.<sup>4</sup>

However, the Scriptures come to us not merely that they be read or that their words be repeated. The Scriptures come before us so that the message which they bear be thrust forth over people, and people thereby be helped and changed (2 Tim. 3:14-17). That means that every reading of Scripture must actually supply the message of Scripture. This is not wholly possible within the framework of many of the traditional lections. They have been extracted from larger units so that sometimes the context and total significance are lost. This is apt to be the case with lections from the Old Testament. Christians are accustomed to understanding God's will and grace for them in terms of His promises completed in Christ Jesus. That understanding is not always directly signaled in the words of Old Testament readings. From the beginning the Christian Church has had a sound sense about Old Testament lections, particularly the Psalms, and sings the Gloria Patri after them, as though to provide and underscore the Trinitarian interpretation of the lection or canticle. To the lections at the minor services, moreover, it has appended the antiphon: "But Thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us. — Thanks be to Thee, O Lord!" The Epistle has

been traditionally followed by a Gradual which underscored the total Gospel significance of the lection in terms of the day. The Gospel selection, whether it happened to discuss soteriological or ethical materials, preceded the response "Praise be to Thee, O Christ!" These liturgical tokens were designed to refresh a complete insight into the significance of the extract from Scripture used with them. For the Christian needs ever to remember that he is a man in Christ and that God's promises and God's Spirit are his to have and use because of the redeeming work of Christ.

Several implications confront us for the liturgy as we propose to read the Scriptures in every service. The one is that the language must be intelligible. The version must be in the language of the people. There is something strange about the reluctance with which English-speaking people have kept their liturgical version in phase with the speech of the people. Our German forebears did better with the freedom with which they adjusted the German Bible generation by generation to the practiced understanding of their hearers.

A second implication is that the lection must be read as though it is to be understood. Whether the reading is to be "sepia," with inflections that have been abridged and stylized for the sake of liturgical "objectivity," or whether the reading should be normal and interpreted, has been regarded a question of taste. If, however, we assume that through the reading the Christians of the congregation are admonishing one another, it seems rather self-evident that they should hear them inflected and interpreted the way any speech should be if people are to understand it.

A third implication lies in the subject matter of the lesson. If indeed it can be called a "lesson," we may presume that it has a specific purpose. That purpose must be made clear. Already before it is read, hearers should be helped to know what the purpose of the reading is going to be. Worshiping Christians must be led to want to admonish one another with the content of a given lesson. The church year affords convenient defining of the lessons that are to be imparted in each service. Alert ministers who actually accept responsibility for the worship of their hearers will find means of briefing their congregations in advance concerning the purposes and the messages of the respective lessons. It is a valid psycholog-

ical principle that people do not pay attention to messages which they do not want to hear. It would be a dismaying discovery to find how many worshipers—and could we say also pastors?—expect no specific lesson from a lection which is being read in the church service. That situation violates the first principle of Christian worship.

How shall the lesson, the purpose of the lection, be made clear to the hearers? A number of alternatives present themselves. Parish bulletins can give advance information. Bible classes can spend a few minutes on the function of the liturgical selections for the day. The sermon will be the most useful means, since it will be correlated with the lessons of the day and will rely upon the corroboration of their message for its own purpose. However, the sermon in our current practice follows upon the lessons, and it is best that worshipers are alerted to their meaning before the sermon. Some ministers give brief explanations, and sometimes running commentaries, upon details of the lections as they read them. Liturgically this may be disturbing and certainly demands finesse and economy if used at all. Yet the question remains whether the church should not at least from time to time revert to the practice of Louis Harms, who discoursed at some length upon the lection for the day, prior to the sermon itself, which was on another text.<sup>5</sup>

## II

The Scriptures are the center of the church's service. That focus has its implications not only for the liturgy in general, but also for the sermon in particular. We said above that in the Apostolic Church the sermon was an extension of the conversation of Christians and their leaders concerning the lections of the service. That was a sensible procedure, for it safeguarded several emphases simultaneously: the lessons of Scripture were actually thought through, they were applied to the needs and interests of the group, they were explained and understood. Those emphases are essential for the common worship of Christians today and should reflect themselves in the sermon for the day.

The sermon should actually discuss the subject of the lection or lections for the day. That is most simply done when the text of the sermon is a lection. That was the practice traditional in

the Lutheran Church over many centuries. It has its advantages: there is no danger that the lection will not be understood, the central purpose and idea of the day becomes familiar over the years. This procedure also has disadvantages: sources and applications of the teaching of Scripture become unduly limited. Worshipers begin to think of the Scriptures, particularly where they do not attend Bible classes or practice personal Bible reading, as a list of a hundred lections.

In average practice, of course, pastors employ texts other than standard lections or do so in a majority of instances. Here, if the focus of "Scripture in the service" should be maintained, it becomes even more important to relate the subject matter of the sermon and its text to that of the lection. Lutheran communions share with a few others the schedule of the church year and of a sequence of themes for entire services. The Synodical Conference, particularly through its specialist Pastor Frederic H. K. Soll, has amplified the host of alternative pericopic selections which the nineteenth-century German provincial Lutheran churches had developed in extension of the standard pericopes.<sup>6</sup> All are useful for maintaining unity between the propers for the day and especially the lections, and the sermon. The pastor who wishes to safeguard that unity will employ also other devices to that end, such as a careful selection of hymns.

More must be said, however, concerning the technique by which the reading of Scripture maintains its central and unifying influence in the service. It is possible for a man to choose the text for his sermon from a pericopic selection for the day and then vitiate the unity of the service by side-stepping the central lesson of his text or by departing from a substantial Christian theology altogether. The Protestant preachers who so frequently served as models to our Church in its first years of English preaching did not for the most part follow the liturgical year. Many of them were, furthermore, impelled by principles of the pulpit which are at variance with a concept of the church at worship. One such principle is the "prophetic"—that the minister harangues the audience, and it listens to him. This disrupts the structure of worship, in which each Christian through his pastor addresses each brother present. Another faulty principle of preaching is the moralizing one, that

the minister is on hand to stimulate his parish to various modes of organizational behavior. A subsidiary of this principle is the preaching that is chiefly church-administrative—the pastor summoning his people to participate in churchgoing, Christian giving, communing, or other activities by which the demands of the organization are met. Again these principles disrupt the mutual supply of faith and exhortation to Christian living which the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Sacrament of the Altar are to make possible in Christian worship.

When a minister thinks of his sermon as the counterpart of discussion by his people of the lections for the day, a number of specifications will suggest themselves. As he prepares his message, the lections for the day, and the theology surrounding those lections, must be before him. However, the language in which he states his message, and the method by which he brings his message to the hearer, will be given by his understanding of the people—what they need, and how they talk to one another.<sup>7</sup> A Swiss pastor states that he has been preparing his sermons by meeting with a group of his people on Thursday or Friday evenings. They first discuss the preceding Sunday's sermon, then discuss the text for the next Sunday, verse by verse, and point out applications and concerns of the congregation with the text.<sup>8</sup> In actual practice the minister frequently does this with one of his church groups, or with a shut-in, or in a catechetical discussion.

The manner of such preaching is going to reveal the pastor's thought for his people. In it he will show not merely that he speaks *to* people, but that he is speaking *on behalf of* people. His style will be conversational, in that it anticipates questions that would be asked, objections that might be leveled. The pastor will not ask questions for the sake of padding his material, but exclusively for signaling his concern for questions and problems that people actually have.

This emphasis in preaching, that it is on behalf of the people as they reflect upon the message of the Scriptures, will do notable things to preaching style and language. Jesus Christ our Lord is Himself the model there, in His level of language to the common people, who "heard him gladly," or St. Paul, as he writes to the Philippians, "his joy and his crown." It was about utterances in



public worship that St. Paul said: "In the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue" (1 Cor. 14:19). The pastor will not imitate deficiencies or perversions of the language of his people, but certainly he will not, as their spokesman, mouth words which they do not employ or understand.

It is quite possible that preaching is in a state of transition. People become progressively less and less able to concentrate upon the spoken word. If preaching is to continue, it must truly serve the purpose of growth in grace. If preaching is changing, what direction shall it take? This consideration would suggest that the course of preaching in the future should be dictated by its course in the Apostolic Age. Let preaching, like the hymns and prayers, be recognizable as the admonition of the people to one another. Let the pastor truly be the minister of the people, each man's servant for edifying each other one. And let all be done with the Holy Scriptures as the point of origin, the power of preaching simply the power of the Scriptures themselves, the significance of the worship this, that men have come together so that God might speak to them from His Word.

St. Louis, Mo.

#### NOTES

1. *Expositor's Greek New Testament*, IV, p. 126, N. J. D. White, New York
2. Luther D. Reed, *The Lutheran Liturgy*, p. 273. Philadelphia, 1947.
3. Cf. M. Reu, *Homiletics*, Chicago, 1925, pp. 2-3. He quotes 1 Cor. 14:1 ff.; 12:27 ff.; James 3:1 ff.; Heb. 10:25 ff. He and White, *loc. cit.*, quote Justin Martyr, First Apology, Section 67, on the practice of exhortation following upon the reading. Reu derives the word "homily" from this conversational communication of the congregation, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
4. Saint Ignatius to the Philadelphians, VIII, 1; *Apostolic Fathers*, I, Lake tr., Putnams, 1912, p. 247.
5. E. g. McClintock and Strong, *Cyclopaedia*, IV, p. 83.
6. Cf. P. Nesper, *Biblical Texts*, Wartburg, 1952, for fourteen series.
7. Cf. Arthur John Gossip, "The Whole Counsel of God," *Interpretation*, July, 1947, p. 332; reprinted in *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY*, pp. 355 to 368, 1948, XIX.
8. *Evangelische Welt*, February 1, 1952, p. 61, Bethel/Bielefeld.

# The New Testament Concept of Fellowship

By F. E. MAYER

This article will suggest three basic principles for a discussion of the term *κοινωνία* as employed in the New Testament. In view of the significance of this term in the present movement toward Lutheran Union and even World Ecumenicity, the Faculty of Concordia Seminary at St. Louis, Mo., devoted several hours to a discussion of the term on the basis of guidelines prepared by a committee. The material offered in this article is to a very large extent the author's attempt to recapture the salient points of the faculty's discussion. The article will discuss, first, the constancy of Biblical terminology and the relativity of ecclesiastical terminology; second, the nature of *κοινωνία* as presented in the New Testament; and third, the manifestation of the New Testament fellowship in accord with *πίστις* and *ἀγάπη*.

## I

Ecclesiastical terminology may prove to be not only a blessing, but also a bane. Frequently ecclesiastical terminology is invested with a false halo. It becomes such an intimate part of our ecclesiastical apparatus that we are in danger of equating the Scriptural with the ecclesiastical *usus loquendi* of certain terms, though they have little in common. The dogmatical term "Church Triumphant," for example, has no relation to the Scriptural concept *ἐκκλησία* since this term always denotes only the saints on earth — also in Heb. 12:23. Nevertheless as an ecclesiastical term the phrase "Church Triumphant" expresses beautifully the thoughts which are contained in other terms of the Scriptures. But it will lead to confusion, possibly even to erroneous views, if a Scriptural concept is interpreted in the light of the meaning with which this same word is invested in dogmatical terminology. After all, not the sound or the spelling of a word determines its meaning, but the *usus loquendi*.

It must furthermore be kept in mind that practically all dog-



matrical terminology arises in controversy and is therefore so largely antithetical. Take the prepositions "in, with, under" used in connection with the Real Presence. As Luther intimates in the Smalcald Articles, they do not explain the positive aspect of the Real Presence. They were used primarily *against* the Roman transubstantiation and *against* the Reformed charge that the Lutherans teach consubstantiation.

And finally it must be noted that ecclesiastical terminology is always inadequate. No man-made terminology can ever express the mysteries of godliness, such as the doctrine of the Trinity. This term is only a partial statement of Scripture's revelation concerning the mystery of the Triune God. The twofold German ecclesiastical terminology of *Dreieinigkeit* and *Dreifaltigkeit* comes closer than the English term "Trinity." The other problem is that no term retains its original meaning. The term "nature" as used in the Christological controversy of the Early Church no longer conveys to the average person the original idea, and the term requires specific explanation.

Failure to observe these principles may result in making the ecclesiastical terminology the new authority in religion. Because of the loyalty to its historic Confessions the Lutheran Church may fall victim to the tendency which would elevate dogmatical terminology to the position of a second *principium cognoscendi*. Or in opposition to such a trend and in the attempt to retain the Bible as the sole source and norm of Christian doctrine one may be inclined to discard all ecclesiastical terminology. This will lead to doctrinal license and theological anarchy, which ultimately will destroy not only the historical continuity of the Christian Church, but also burden the Church with new and possibly anti-Scriptural ecclesiastical terminology.

One of the great problems confronting the Christian Church is the entire question of fellowship. The Lutherans of America are confronted with the strong desire for union and fellowship. All Lutheran synods have placed the problem of fellowship high on their agendas. World-wide fellowship of Lutherans was the basic *motif* in the meetings at Hannover. It is therefore of utmost significance that the partners in any discussion use the term fellowship in the same sense; otherwise they will constantly talk past each

other. There dare be no equation of the ecclesiastical and the Scriptural meaning of fellowship. The Biblical term expresses spiritual and transcendent truths which are not contained in the ecclesiastical terms pulpit, altar, prayer, synodical fellowship. Indeed it would be a pity if the New Testament concept of fellowship were reduced in its significance to convey no more than is expressed in the ecclesiastical term. The concept "fellowship" quite naturally plays a significant role in the present ecumenical movement, the World Council of Churches. But here the situation seems to be just the reverse from that in Lutheranism, inasmuch as many identify the outward fellowship with the New Testament concept of *κοινωνία*; in other words, they elevate a man-made fellowship to the glorious Spirit-wrought fellowship. Lutheran theology makes a clear distinction between the ecclesiastical and Scriptural significance of the term fellowship. This may at times require such actions as seem to be absolutely contradictory and lead non-Lutherans to speak of the enigmatic character of Lutheranism. It must therefore be the sincere endeavor of Lutherans to be very clear concerning the Biblical term *κοινωνία* in its relation to, and difference from, the dogmatical use of "fellowship." This implies that we must trace the historic origin and current relevance of the terms pulpit, altar, prayer fellowship. This implies especially that we re-study and re-evaluate the New Testament concept of *koinonia*. We must free this New Testament concept from all ecclesiastical encumbrances and carefully distinguish between the Biblical and the ecclesiastical use of the term "fellowship."

This is not a theoretical problem. Every Christian is confronted with it whenever he seriously considers the implication of the words "Our Father" in the Lord's Prayer. These words indicate clearly, as our Catechism points out, that all Christians pray not only for, but also with one another. The New Testament speaks of a prayer fellowship which transcends the prayer fellowship described in the ecclesiastical understanding of this term. Each in its respective sphere speaks of a fellowship, but from a different viewpoint and under different situations. Under given circumstances a Christian not only may, but also must pray with all Christians. And such a prayer is indeed a manifestation of the fellowship which embraces

all Christians in all denominations and even outside a denominational connection. Then, again, the Christian must restrict his prayer fellowship to such as are united with him in the profession of a commonly accepted basis of doctrinal agreement. There is a fellowship in both instances. But the former term has different connotations from the second. Unless this distinction is observed, confusion is bound to arise.

## II

The term κοινωνία and its cognates may be defined as *Anteil nehmen*, *Anteil geben*, and *Anteil haben*.<sup>\*</sup> In its first use the term denotes that activity in which one shares with others the same blessings; it is a joint participation. The second meaning expresses the activity in which Christians share their blessings with others; it is a bounteous communication of one's gifts to others. The third definition presents κοινωνία more as an abstract concept, as a frame of mind in which two or more consider all things common (κοινός); where two or more hearts beat as one, Gal. 2:9.

The New Testament presents fellowship as a vertical and as a horizontal activity, i.e., both soteriological and sociological. In its vertical, or soteriological, aspect, κοινωνία is the beautiful communion and fellowship between the Christian and the Triune God. We have a fellowship with God the Father, with Christ the Son, and with the Holy Spirit. Keeping in mind the threefold definition of the term as used in the New Testament, the Christian has part in, and shares in, all the treasures which the Triune God has prepared for us. In particular, St. Paul frequently uses the term when he describes the share which the Christian has in Christ, 1 Cor. 1:9. Through faith the believer is ἐν χριστῷ and therefore shares in every phase of Christ's soteriological activity. We share in His innocent birth, His holy life, His ignominious death, His glorious resurrection. We share with Him His victory over our enemies. Yes, and we also share His stripes and bonds, "the fellowship of His sufferings" (Phil. 3:10), and therefore also the conformity of His glory. The fellowship of Christ, so beautifully described by

<sup>\*</sup> Hauck in G. Kittel, *Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, s. v., κοινων — Cf. A. C. Hardt, "Fellowship with God," *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY*, XV, 505; XVI, 433; 513.

St. John in his Gospel and Epistle, is the guarantee that we share in the Father's love and the Spirit's comforting work, 2 Cor. 13:14.

The fellowship described in the New Testament is a sharing in the Gospel. This means nothing less than that every Christian shares in all the treasures which the Gospel proclaims and offers to men. There is but one Christ, one love of God, one Gospel. The Christian possesses all, or he would not be a Christian at all. Every Christian, no matter what his denominational affiliation, has fellowship in the "entire Christ," for it is impossible to "parcel Christ" (*Christum stücken*, as Luther puts it). Faith always takes hold of the entire Christ, and the fellowship in its soteriological aspect is always perfect.

The New Testament concept of fellowship is also, and probably particularly so, a horizontal or sociological fellowship. "A deep and vital *koinonia* unites all Christians; for they have in common the *summum bonum* vainly sought by man-made religions . . . : one redemption, one forgiveness, one heritage, one Spirit, one Savior, one Father. 'We are *all* the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus! and, if children of our heavenly *Father*, then brothers and sisters of one another.'" \* The intimate fellowship is also clearly portrayed in the Scriptural use of the term *ecclesia*, which denotes the number of believers, either as they are scattered throughout the world or as they are found at a particular place, 1 Cor. 1:2, and emphasizes the solidarity of all Christians as a fellowship, a commonwealth. Eph. 2:14 ff. The rich and meaningful concept *σῶμα τοῦ χριστοῦ* expresses the transcendent unity of the Church in spite of the great diversity. This one body of Christ transcends all earthly, social, racial, cultural, yes, also denominational distinctions. According to the New Testament every Christian shares with every other Christian the blessings which he enjoys. The New Testament fellowship crosses all denominational and all man-made lines of distinction. The middle wall or partition is completely torn down. Every Christian shares his blessings with the Christians in every denomination and in every part of the world. This truth dare not be minimized by the ecclesiastical concept of fellowship, expressed in such ecclesiastical terminology as pulpit, altar, and prayer fel-

\* Hardt, *op. cit.*, XVI, 436.

lowship. Both have their very specific place in our Christian life, but in different spheres. The New Testament concept of fellowship places a tremendous responsibility on every Christian. He must be ready to share his treasures with others. The remarkable thing is that whenever we share our blessings, they increase in meaning and value, according to the German adage: *Geteilte Freude ist doppelte Freude*. God distributes His spiritual gifts differently during various historical periods and among various classes of men. We share in the rich hymnody of a previous age and to a large extent not of Lutheran origin. In fact, a great many of the blessings which we enjoy are ecumenical and catholic. Some Christians may excel in theological knowledge, others in such virtues as patience, Christian courage, missionary zeal, outstanding liberality. These gifts are the possession of the entire *Una Sancta*, and every member shares in every testimony of the Gospel, wherever witnessed, in the mission work for Christ in every part of the globe, in every God-pleasing exegetical and dogmatical contribution, no matter by whom offered, in short, in every victory for Christ made by any Christian, regardless of denominational connection. That is implied in the very term "fellowship." It means that all Christians share each other's joys and sorrows. We rejoice with those who gain conquests for Christ. We grieve with those who for the Gospel's sake must endure hardship.

This fellowship is a reality. No doubt the interest of maintaining intact all implications of pulpit, altar, prayer, synodical fellowship may sometimes minimize the significance of the transcendent fellowship described in the New Testament. The glory of the New Testament *κοινωνία* may escape us at times, because this fellowship is perceptible solely by faith (*sola fide percipibilis*). Only the eye of faith can see the nature of this fellowship; can understand that it is a sharing in the glorious work of Christ. Though it is being hidden from the eye of men, it is a tremendous reality.

This fellowship is indeed a precious gift of God. It is a fellowship which places us into the most intimate union with God. It binds people together in a closer fellowship than any social relationship, even the relationship of husband and wife. Therefore we are to treasure it, do everything to deepen it, and avoid everything in doctrine and life which might endanger its continuance.

## III

Though the fellowship is perceptible only by faith, it must and does manifest itself. It will do so in accord 1) with faith and 2) with love.

1. The *koinonia* as a fellowship of believers is established solely and only by saving faith (*fides qua*). The fellowship of Christians with one another rests solely on the fellowship with Christ through faith. Every believer is united with Christ, and thus every child of God is also united with every other child of God. 1 John 1:3. The union and fellowship between all Christians is engendered by, and rests upon, the Gospel, the means of grace (*fides quae*). The faith which one believes, commonly known as the "Creed," is always the same intensively, but varies extensively, inasmuch as some appropriate more of the Gospel and reach a fuller understanding of the revealed truth than others. But every Christian, regardless of denominational affiliation, believes and accepts the essential, the fundamental articles of the Christian faith, and thereby is a member of the *ecclesia* and active in the fellowship of faith. (Trigl. 227, 58; 499; 691, 51—53.)

Since the spiritual fellowship is engendered only by the Gospel, the *fides quae*, the fellowship must aim to achieve two goals: a) agreement in, and confession of, the Gospel, and b) the rejection of all views, teachings, tendencies, and practices which will jeopardize the *fides qua*.

a) The New Testament fellowship demands that Christians do all in their power to agree in the confession of the Gospel, 1 Cor. 1:10 (*consensus de doctrina evangelii*, Augsb. Conf. VII). What does this imply? It seems quite evident that the Reformers never thought of the Gospel as a summary of isolated doctrinal statements, a series of dogmatical *loci*. Luther, in particular, speaks of the Gospel as an integral unit of the saving faith of which Christ is the center. This he expressed in the well-known preface to his commentary on Galatians:

Denn in meinem Herzen herrscht allein dieser Artikel, naemlich der Glaube an Christum, aus welchem, durch welchen und zu welchem bei Tag und bei Nacht alle meine theologischen Gedanken fliessen und zurueckfliessen. Dennoch empfinde ich, dass ich von der Weisheit, welche eine so grosse Hoehe, Breite und Tiefe hat,



nur einige schwache, arme Erstlinge und gleichsam Broecklein ergriffen habe. (In my heart one article rules supreme; namely, faith in Christ Jesus. From this article, through this article, and returning to this article, all my theological thoughts by day and night proceed and return. Nevertheless, I feel that I have comprehended only a few small and weak elementary truths, just a few crumbs, of the glorious wisdom which has such height, width, and depth.)

It has often been said that the statement in Article VII of the Augsburg Confession allows for a very broad premise for synodical or denominational fellowship. The historical situation and the context indicate that this is not the point of Article VII. The antithesis is rather this: The Romanists argued that the unity of the Church consists in uniformity of ceremonies; the Lutherans maintained that *consensus de doctrina evangelii* is sufficient for unity. At first glance, this may appear to present a very broad and liberal basis for fellowship. And it is indeed liberal, i. e., evangelical, free from every form of legalism. But it is also very narrow. Intensively all Christians are in perfect unity of doctrine. But extensively the knowledge of the Gospel may and does vary in the individual Christians, within the various congregations, and in the several church bodies. We must constantly exercise care lest we view the Gospel as a summary of ten, fifty, or one hundred *loci*, neatly compartmentalized according to a system. The Gospel is, as Luther points out so beautifully, the message of Jesus Christ. It is impossible to make the *κωνωνία* dependent on an *a priori* fixed organic whole of Christian doctrine, consisting of a maximum or minimum number of dogmatical *loci*. Under a given circumstance, the Apostles' Creed may be sufficient, for it is indeed the entire doctrine of the Gospel. Under other conditions the seventeen doctrinal articles of the Augustana become an adequate summary of the doctrine of the Gospel. Or it may become necessary to formulate specific doctrines of the Gospel in such detail as was done in the Formula of Concord. To achieve agreement in the doctrine of the Gospel requires much more than the formal adoption of confessional statements and agreements in terminology. To achieve *consensus de doctrina evangelii* requires first of all an agreement in the center, heart, and core of the Gospel. Such agreement will strive to reach

out, like the ripples of a pool, until it covers every area of Christian faith and life. In the spirit of *κοινωνία* all will then speak the same language, 1 Cor. 1:10.

b) Because the New Testament *κοινωνία* is engendered solely by faith, and rests only on faith, Christian fellowship must reject all views, trends, or practices which in any way might jeopardize and ultimately destroy the faith of a *κοινωνικός*. Faith is engendered by, and rests solely upon, the Word of God. Any tampering with the Word of God may, and frequently does, destroy faith. Since Christ is the center of all Christian revelation and of all proclamation within the Christian Church, 1 Cor. 2:2-10, therefore any deviation from the Word, though it may appear non-essential, will ultimately strike at the very heart and center of the Gospel. The spiritual fellowship is so delicate that it cannot endure any deviation from Christ's Gospel. With Luther all Christians deplore the schisms and dissensions within the Christian Church. It is no easy matter to be separate from others, and even to be charged with separatism. Nevertheless, Luther is right when he maintains that only one thing counts; namely, to maintain the fellowship of the Spirit and Christ. For then it will do no harm if one is not in agreement with those who pervert the Word of God and thereby cause dissensions. He summarizes:

I would therefore rather that the errorists and the entire world separate from me than I should separate myself from Christ, so that He become my enemy. This would be the case if I would depart from His clear Word and follow vain dreams. The One Christ is more significant to me than untold unities in love. (*Der eine (unus) Christus ist mir groesser als unzähllich viel Einheiten in der Liebe.* St. Louis, IX: 727.)

Commenting on the admonition to fight valiantly in our struggle against our great spiritual enemies (Eph. 6:12), Luther points to the difficulty which this raises in the Christian's life. No one wants to lose his life. But much greater than one's life is the treasure of the Gospel. This we must fight to obtain and retain at all odds. The world and the devil suggest that it is the Christian's highest goal to retain Christian love even if he must yield in matters of doctrine. Luther answers very positively:



No, my dear man, I want no peace and unity on account of which one loses the Word of God; for then eternal life and everything would be lost. Here we dare not yield in the least point. We can yield solely and only to the Word of God. The Word and the Christian doctrine are given in order to effect Christian unity and fellowship. Where this is obtained, everything else will follow in good order; where there is no spiritual unity, there is no other kind of unity either. Please do not talk to me of love and friendship, which will play havoc (*periclitatur*) with the Word of God or faith. For we are no longer concerned with love, but with the Word of God, which brings eternal life, God's grace, and all the heavenly treasures. (Mir nicht des Friedens und der Einigkeit, darueber man Gottes Wort verliert, denn damit waere schon das ewige Leben und alles verloren. IX: 831.)

Luther's attitude toward Zwingli at Marburg has often been criticized as unnecessarily severe and even separatistic or schismatic. True, a person may remain in the fellowship of the Holy Christian Church even if he denies the doctrine of the Real Presence. However, it must be kept in mind that a denial of the Real Presence when predicated on rationalistic arguments or Nestorian aberrations, may ultimately lead, as Luther pointed out, to the loss of Christ's redemptive work. The same is true of every doctrinal deviation, though it may at first appear rather insignificant, for it may ultimately lead to a denial of the heart of the Christian Gospel and actually destroy the faith and fellowship which is predicated on faith. Therefore, Christian fellowship will manifest itself both in stating the Christian faith fully in accord with the Gospel and in rejecting all errors which endanger the faith.

2. All Christians are united in faith, share one and the same Christ, and walk together in a common way to a common goal. It is a glorious soteriological fellowship. But all are also bound together in the most intimate sociological fellowship on earth. Therefore this fellowship will always manifest itself in love. The Christian is constantly confronted with the question: How can my fellowship which, on the one hand, is according to faith and dare not deny any truth of God's Word, manifest itself, on the other hand, in accordance with ἀγάπη? There are three spheres in particular where fellowship becomes active according to love.

In the first place the New Testament encourages us to maintain and to enrich all the existing outward manifestations of fellowships which presuppose and are based on a common confession. For that reason we deeply cherish the fellowship in our local congregations as we regularly join with fellow Christians in a common confession of our faith and in the mutual enterprise of lovingly helping each other. We prize highly the fellowship existing in our synodical affiliations, for there we enjoy the fellowship which unites men in a joint confession and a united endeavor to build Christ's Church. We must do all within our power to maintain and to deepen this fellowship.

Secondly, the New Testament fellowship will manifest itself in every endeavor to expand outward manifestations of the fellowship. It is, of course, deplorable that we frequently restrict the term "fellowship" largely to its ecclesiastical definition, so that we associate the term almost exclusively with synodical fellowship. It must be kept in mind that the synodical fellowship refers to a human organization. To view fellowship only organizationally or to use the term "fellowship" only in its ecclesiastical sense is missing the depth and beauty of the New Testament concept of fellowship. If we would maintain both — the Biblical and the ecclesiastical definition of fellowship — we must observe closely Luther's very fine distinction between the nature of faith and of love. He states that the former is very narrow, the latter, however, very wide. It is love's nature to bear and to forgive, and it can do so even at the risk of being deceived, because it will thereby not lose Christ. In the Letter to the Galatians the Apostle Paul gives us a good pattern how the New Testament *κοινωνία* will manifest itself in a love that goes all out for the brother, even the weak and erring brother — a love which, however, will not yield one inch to the Judaizing teachers. Toward the Bohemians, Luther was extremely charitable and long-suffering, toward Zwingli he was almost adamant. Love is kind toward all, but it will not tolerate any dissimulation (Gal. 2:11 ff.). Love is tolerant and long-suffering, but intolerant of error, since any error may jeopardize someone's faith and become a *σκάνδαλον* to my brother. This deep concern for the brother's faith — and this includes every brother in the fellowship regardless of denominational affiliation — may at times compel

such actions as appear to issue from loveless intolerance. Luther states this paradoxical situation in his comments on Gal. 5:9 as follows:

The doctrine must remain a continuous and unbroken circle in which there can be no fissure or break. As soon as the smallest crack occurs, the circle is no longer whole. What does it benefit the Jews to believe in one God, to believe many other articles, to accept the entire Scriptures, when they deny Christ? Therefore who sins against one is guilty of all. We certainly are ready to keep peace with everybody and to show our love to them. Just so that they will let the doctrine of the Gospel remain whole and entire. If we cannot attain this, then they expect us to love them in vain. Cursed is that love which is maintained to the detriment of the doctrine of the faith, to which everything must yield: love, the Apostles, and even angels from heaven (St. Louis, IX: 645).

It is the very nature of love that it will not countenance a doctrinal situation in which a child of God runs the risk of losing his faith. On the contrary, love toward the fellow Christian demands an unqualified confession of the truth.

The New Testament *κοινωνία* will manifest itself in accord with love, lastly, by a spirit of true humility, "doctrinal" humility. Certainty of the doctrine is a God-required prerequisite of the pastor; in fact, certainty is the very nature of faith. Nevertheless, every Christian teacher in the Church as well as the layman in the pew has the old Adam, who leans toward doctrinal complacency, toward a false doctrinal security, and at times toward doctrinal arrogance. There is always the danger of falling into a *Lehrgerechtigkeit* which is equally as ugly and equally as disastrous as *Werkgerechtigkeit*. True humility will say with Dr. Walther:

"We do not belong to those who believe that their knowledge requires no expansion nor correction." (Wir gehoeren nicht zu denen, welche meinen, dass ihre Erkenntnis keiner Erweiterung und Berichtigung beduerfe. Walther, *Lutheraner*, XIII, 1. Cf. Western Distr., 1867, 31, Cp. Luther: Preface to Galatians, IX: 8, quoted above.)

After all, as great a theologian as Martin Luther had gathered but a few crumbs of the article of Christ, which is so rich, so deep, so all-embracing, that throughout eternity it will be our delight to

study the marvelous depth of God's mysterious being. In the New Testament *κοινωνία* the elder shares the simple faith of the child; the learned theologian in the remarkable insights of the humble peasant; the successful pastor in the victory of the experienced Christian in the pew; yes, and more often than may appear, the orthodox theologian not only gives to, but also receives from, a heterodox teacher some spiritual gift. This is the glory of the New Testament fellowship, that every Christian shares in all humility, but also in deep gratitude the manifold blessings of all.

Christian fellowship will always manifest itself in accord with *πίστις* and *ἀγάπη*; according to faith in "Aengstlichkeit um die reine Lehre" and according to love in "weltumfassender Liebe." In matters of doctrine and faith we must have an extremely narrow and keen conscience. In matters of love we must be broad and wide, in fact so broad that our love will embrace the entire world. This is the difficult but blessed paradox of *κοινωνία*.

St. Louis, Mo.

# Natural Law and the New Testament

By ROBERT HOEFERKAMP \*

This paper will attempt to investigate elements of Natural Law which are generally alleged to appear in the New Testament. Thus a historical discussion of Natural Law and the indication of the importance of the topic for current theological discussion are in order.

## I

Natural Law is the tenet which posits the existence of an objective order of ethical standards of right and wrong, rooted in the nature of the universe. Man can discover this objective standard and apply it to his individual needs. A theory of Natural Law is very often associated with the belief in natural theology or natural religion, i. e., that man on his own initiative can attain knowledge of God.

Throughout history the theory of Natural Law has taken on many different interpretations and has been put to many different uses. The reason for this confusion in interpretation and use of Natural Law lies in the confusion in meaning of the words "nature" and "law" and in the ambiguity involved in combining these two. "Reason and the concept of nature are entangled in history and in the infinite variability of human desire; thus they reflect the changing sensitivities and insensitivities of man."<sup>1</sup> In fact, "reason" can "rationalize" the existing order and make absolute good out of the relative good of the existing order. It can even sanction the evil that "good" men do. Natural Law may be used as a weapon of self-interest. "What natural law is at any particular time depends, then, upon who is using it and for what purpose."<sup>2</sup>

Thus it will be useful to present a brief overview of the development and use of Natural Law in human history, particularly in our Western tradition. We begin with the Greeks.<sup>3</sup> The characteristic feature of the Greek νόμος concept is its foundation in religion;

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in the most ancient times νόμος is understood as a creation and revelation of Zeus βασιλεύς. In the fifth century the authority of the νόμος was shaken through the Greeks' acquaintance with νόμοι of other kinds in the world and through the growing autonomous self-assertion of the Greeks as manifested, for example, in the Peloponnesian War. The Sophists began to teach that there was no objective divine law and hence that there were no gods. Over against them Socrates and Plato insisted that there were laws rooted in nature. According to Plato, the νόμος springs from a universally valid principle, the νοῦς. Aristotle held that natural law principles can be learned by observing the very nature of social relations. It is, however, with the Stoics that the principle of Natural Law comes into its own. The Stoics no longer call political and social laws νόμοι. The true νόμος is to be found only in the cosmos; it is the universal reason which determines human moral action. In fact, the νόμος is equated with Θεός. By virtue of the νοῦς or λόγος dwelling within him, man can recognize the νόμος and order his life according to it. Thus man comes to know himself and wins his freedom. Of course, the immanent, ontological character of this νόμος robs the divine of its transcendent nature. Roman jurisprudence adopted this Stoic view of Natural Law.

The theologians of the Eastern Church held that the Logos of the Stoic philosophers is the Son of God, who therefore hallows man's reason. Thus the Roman law of the Byzantine Empire, based on Stoic Natural Law, is also hallowed by the Son of God. This fact led to the close association of the Eastern Church with the State.<sup>4</sup>

In the Western Church, Augustine held with St. Paul that the world has a definite order because God has made it as it is. Nevertheless, his deeper understanding of sin caused him to see life outside of the Kingdom of God as the "very perversion of true life."<sup>5</sup> Yet the Western Church in time ceased to view itself as the goal of an eschatological process, as with Augustine, and came to regard itself as one sociological body among others. Aquinas' Aristotelian dichotomy between the natural and the supernatural spheres is the basis for the belief that the believer and unbeliever alike live according to the Natural Law. God's revelation, available only in the Church, merely supplements the natural order. Since man's natural reason and will are weakened by sin, modern Tho-



mists conclude that the Roman Church must control secular life in order to guide secular man's will and reason.<sup>6</sup>

In general, the Reformers believed in a God-given Natural Law. But they rejected the Thomistic dichotomy between the natural and the supernatural; for, they held, everything in this world is "natural," i.e., created by God. Since God is the only Source of truth, the dichotomy between "reason" and "revelation" is also rejected.<sup>7</sup> Luther's teaching concerning Natural Law has called forth a special literature dealing with the question.<sup>8</sup> Some interpreters make Luther a traditionalist in respect to Natural Law; others state that his treatment of Natural Law is "incidental and cursory."<sup>9</sup> Troeltsch claimed that Luther united the Christian and the Natural Law in a conservative ethics of calling, family, and social relationships, "but this union is incomplete and ends in a patriarchal conception of natural law and glorification of state power on the one hand, and on the other an inner political and social indifference." This view has been vigorously combated by Karl Holl and the Swedish Lutheran theologians. According to their interpretation, Luther sees the Natural Law as God's demand of love.

The natural law is not conceived by Luther as a part, so to speak, of the inward, psychological furniture of human nature, but as something given in and with the 'theological conscience,' that is, the awareness of being confronted, with a mediated immediacy, by the living God Himself.<sup>10</sup>

By means of the stations or orders of life, which Luther calls *larvae Dei*, God Himself confronts men concretely, gives them such "natural knowledge" of Himself as they have (which includes a consciousness of the Natural Law), and moves men in these structures to help their neighbor.<sup>11</sup> Thus, in addition, these interpreters deny that Luther holds any doctrine of natural theology, if by this term one means the Thomistic and Aristotelian rationalistic deduction of God's existence from the physical universe. McNeill holds that Natural Law has no place in Luther's religious teaching concerning salvation, but that it is "determinative for Luther's political thinking."<sup>12</sup> Thus, for Luther, the Christian finds himself in a dilemma, because he wants to transform the world by faith and love, but must also preserve mankind and uphold the orders of creation.<sup>13</sup>

Melanchthon finds that Romans 1 and 2 recognizes Natural Law.<sup>14</sup> This he says already in the *Loci* of 1521. Yet, because of the Fall, men do not agree to the *principia practica* as they do to the *principia speculativa*.<sup>15</sup> Most of all the Reformers, Zwingli subjects Natural Law to the theology of faith, since he maintains that grace was operative also among the heathen.<sup>16</sup> Calvin, on the other hand, made a rather extensive use of Natural Law, which he also finds in Romans 1 and 2.<sup>17</sup> Since the knowledge of Natural Law is obscured in the unbelievers, Calvin thought that a theocracy is necessary in which the believers, who fully know the Law, will legislate for all.<sup>18</sup>

Natural theology provoked a great deal of discussion among the theologians of the period of Orthodoxy. In this area the Orthodox theologians went back beyond Luther to the Aristotelian theology of the Middle Ages, for they derived not only the method, but also the content and the meaning of the natural knowledge of God from Aristotelian philosophy.<sup>19</sup> Owing to the inseparable connection which exists between natural theology and Natural Law, we must conclude that Orthodoxy's use of Natural Law was also molded by Greek patterns of thought.<sup>20</sup>

It is well known that the Enlightenment laid great stress on both natural theology and Natural Law; this fact is in keeping with the deistic philosophy of the movement. The absolute Natural Law was set forth as rationally self-evident.<sup>21</sup> It was on this absolute principle of Natural Law, in conjunction with the deism and the moral optimism of the Enlightenment, that the American republic was founded.<sup>22</sup>

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries have seen the complete abandonment of the concept of Natural Law by professional jurists. The Industrial Revolution and the many other political and social ferments of the nineteenth century led scholars to re-examine the case for Natural Law. And so the positivistic German school of Historical Law has demonstrated to its own satisfaction the relativity of all laws.<sup>23</sup> This positivistic theory is now dominant in the law schools and the legal theory of the United States; this is evident from the expression of the late Chief Justice Holmes and the present Chief Justice Vinson. In its extreme form this modern denial of Natural Law sanctioned the Nazi doctrine of *Recht*, which altogether excludes the possibility of international law.<sup>24</sup> The United



Nations as such reject objective international law and recognize only the power of political sovereignty.<sup>25</sup> The present-day ecumenical movement is wrestling with the problem of international disorder. This discussion inevitably leads the various churches to consider the question of Natural Law, the Biblical basis for Natural Law, and the responsibility of the Church to proclaim the Natural Law to the modern distraught world. In fact, this evaluation of the Biblical and theological basis for Natural Law is one of the most crucial areas of debate in the current ecumenical discussion.

In general, three areas of opinion may be discerned in this debate. A great many American and British theologians hold that there are elements, equivalents, or adumbrations of Natural Law in the Bible. For example, Walter M. Horton, while admitting that the Law of Nature strictly as such is not present in the Bible, nevertheless believes that Christian ethics has a double Biblical basis: ἀγάπη and "the ideal of universal justice (*Mishpat*) implied in the Law and the Prophets, summarized by Jesus in the Golden Rule, and defined by St. Paul in Romans 2:14-15."<sup>26</sup> He further believes that the Natural Law aspect of Christian ethics can be rationally united with the Natural Law concepts of Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics and with the corresponding concepts in modern India and China. In company with these non-Christian moral principles, Christian ethics should defend the inalienable rights of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."<sup>27</sup> C. H. Dodd, the leading British New Testament scholar, holds that since the God of creation is identical with the God of redemption, the "new law of Christ" is identical with the "law of creation." This law of creation is to be equated with the Noachian Covenant of Genesis 9. Thus it is the Church's duty not only to establish a specific discipline of *catechesis* for its members, but also "to pronounce in Christ's name moral judgments upon human conduct beyond the limits of its own membership."<sup>28</sup>

The second position is that of Karl Barth, who passionately rejects all notions of natural theology and Natural Law. Out of his Christocentric dialectical theology, Barth has developed a Christian ethics growing out from the center of the Biblical message. In this ethic, Gospel and Law are closely connected. Christ is Lord also over the world and the state. Thus the Christian Church proclaims the Lordship of Jesus to the world when it wishes to address

it on ethical issues. This practical application has been worked out in Barth's much-discussed recent pamphlet *Christengemeinde und Bürgergemeinde*.<sup>29</sup>

The third position is represented by a number of Lutherans, of whom Anders Nygren may be taken to be the chief spokesman. This tendency also firmly rejects any traditional concepts of natural theology and Natural Law as deistic in character.<sup>30</sup> It holds fast to the distinction between the Old and the New Aeons, which Barth's position seems to obliterate, and stresses that the Christian Gospel cannot control politics. These men speak of the double role of the Christian in society, although they recognize that this position, when carried to the extreme, can lead to the dangerous "compartmentalization" between Church and human life which was evident in some Lutherans in Germany during the war. Finally, the new impulses set in motion by Nygren have not yet been developed systematically.<sup>31</sup>

In addition, we might note that the Neo-Thomist movement in the Roman Catholic Church is also bringing to the fore Natural Law considerations.<sup>32</sup>

With this historical and contemporary milieu in mind, we can proceed to investigate the Natural Law passages in the New Testament.

## II

We have already pointed to the close relationship between natural theology and Natural Law. Where one is present, the other is inevitably found. Since this is true, we shall investigate, in addition to the one Natural Law passage *par excellence*, Rom. 2:14-16, three other famous "natural theology" passages: Acts 14:15-17, Acts 17:22-31, and Rom. 1:19-20.

The first-mentioned passage in Acts is the impassioned speech of Paul and Barnabas at Lystra to the throng who have mistaken the two missionaries for Mercury and Jupiter after Paul had healed a crippled man. This speech is particularly significant, since it is the first formal approach of Christian missionaries to non-Jewish people recorded in the New Testament. A brief outline of the address may be given as follows: 1) exhortation not to worship Paul and Barnabas, for they are only men, v. 15; 2) the good news that the Lystrans should turn from their idol worship to serve the living God, the Creator, v. 15 b; 3) up to the present time the

living God has allowed all the nations to walk in their idolatry, although He had given testimony to Himself in natural phenomena, vv. 16-17.

The fact that the word εὐαγγελιζόμενοι is used in v. 15 is significant. It is the only time in the New Testament that this verb is followed by an infinitive. This missionary term points to the new message which it is the purpose of Paul and Barnabas to proclaim. In 1 Thess. 1:9 there is an almost exact parallel to v. 15 b: "How you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God." The anarthrous Θεὸς ζῶν of v. 15 b is almost equivalent to the proper noun "Jahweh," for which, in fact, it was originally used metonymically.<sup>33</sup> The description of the Creator is a quotation from Ex. 20:11. In v. 17 each of the three participles is subordinated to the one preceding it.<sup>34</sup> God created joy by sending rain; this sending of rain in turn appears as a species of the genus ἀγαθοουργεῖν.

The comparison of this speech with the longer parallel in Acts 17 suggests that Paul and Barnabas meant to continue with a message about the present and the future, pointing to Christ (cf. "in past generations," v. 16, and also the connection in 1 Thess. 1:9-10: "To serve a living and true God and to wait for His Son from heaven").

The fact that the Apostles here proclaim a "revelation of God in creation" is quite obvious; yet this is not the same as the traditional notion of "natural theology." This notion holds that men find the true God in creation by the *analogia entis*, by inferring the Creator's existence and power from the phenomena of creation. But Acts 14:16 does not state that men infer the Creator from the creature, but that God witnesses to Himself by giving rain and fruitful seasons. Second, this speech does not at all say that men received the witness of God in creation. It rather says the very opposite. Men had turned to μάταια. The fact that the Apostles preached to them the good news that they should turn (ἐπιστρέφειν, שׁוּב) from the μάταια to the living God is the clearest possible indication that a rift exists between Creator and creature. In fact, all the statements of the text—that the Gentiles worshiped various deities (Jupiter and Mercury), that God had up to that time permitted them to walk in their own ways, that He nevertheless had not left Himself without witness, and that they were now to turn to the

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The fact that the Apostles here proclaim a "revelation of God in creation" is quite obvious; yet this is not the same as the traditional notion of "natural theology." This notion holds that men find the true God in creation by the *analogia entis*, by inferring the Creator's existence and power from the phenomena of creation. But Acts 14:16 does not state that men infer the Creator from the creature, but that God witnesses to Himself by giving rain and fruitful seasons. Second, this speech does not at all say that men received the witness of God in creation. It rather says the very opposite. Men had turned to μάταια. The fact that the Apostles preached to them the good news that they should *turn* (ἐπιστρέφειν, שׁוּב) from the μάταια to the living God is the clearest possible indication that a rift exists between Creator and creature. In fact, all the statements of the text—that the Gentiles worshiped various deities (Jupiter and Mercury), that God had up to that time permitted them to walk in their own ways, that He nevertheless had not left Himself without witness, and that they were now to turn to the



living God — irrefutably proclaim that the revelation in creation had been spurned. Then why did the Apostles even mention the fact that God had not left Himself without witness? To show them what the μαρτυρία was which they had not accepted, and as a basis for telling them now who the true God is.

The longer parallel to this brief address is St. Paul's famous speech upon the Areopagus in Athens. In his discussions in the market and his conversations with the Epicureans and Stoics he had aroused curiosity by his preaching of Jesus and the resurrection. Their inordinate desire for new and strange religious information caused them to take him to the Areopagus and to have him give a full exposition of his views. The address can be outlined as follows: 1) the *Anknüpfungspunkt* (δεισιδαιμονεστέρους) and the text ('Αγνώστῳ Θεῷ), vv. 22-23; 2) the wrongness and folly of idolatry: for God is the Creator of all things, vv. 24-25, and has made men to seek Him, vv. 26-27; since men are of the γένος of God, He cannot be like a product of human artifice, vv. 28-29; 3) the call to repentance and faith in Jesus and the announcement of the Judgment and the resurrection, vv. 30-32.

The comparative δεισιδαιμονεστέρους of v. 22 is equivalent to a superlative. It appears that in itself the word is neutral and suggests neither approbation nor depreciation. Here "superstitious" (as in A. V.) is probably too strong, but it is probably not meant as complimentary. At best the word connotes "religiosity," not "religion."<sup>35</sup> The altar inscription which Paul quotes has caused a great deal of investigation and discussion. It is true that no investigation has yielded discovery of an actual Athenian altar with this inscription.<sup>36</sup> Of course, the fact that we have no record from antiquity of such an inscription is no proof that this exact inscription did not exist. "Ὁ οὖν ἀγνοοῦντες εὐσεβεῖτε is to be translated, "It is what you do not know but do worship that . . ."<sup>37</sup> V. 24 is a partial quotation of Is. 42:5. V. 25, οὐδὲ ὑπὸ χειρῶν ἀνθρώπων κτλ. finds a parallel in the Epicurean doctrine of the "autarchy" of God.<sup>38</sup> A noteworthy textual variant is ἐξ ἑνὸς αἵματος in v. 26.<sup>39</sup> But the best attested text reads, "He made of one person," namely, Adam. In opposition to the Athenians' theory that the Greeks were αὐτόχθονες, Paul stresses the unity of the human race.<sup>40</sup> Yet his real purpose in mentioning this fact is to show that just as all

men have one origin, so they all have one goal.<sup>41</sup> Between the one origin and the one goal each people has its own time and space limitations, which are imposed on them to make it possible for them to seek God.<sup>42</sup> This is a possibility because God is οὐ μακρὰν ἀπὸ ἐνὸς ἐκάστου ἡμῶν.<sup>43</sup> The ἐν αὐτῷ of v. 28 is equivalent to "in the power of," "by."<sup>44</sup> The words ἐν αὐτῷ γὰρ ζῶμεν καὶ κινούμεθα καὶ ἐσμέν are probably the work of Epimenides, a half-mythical figure in Greek history.<sup>45</sup> This statement Paul substantiates by a direct quotation from the Stoic poet Aratus' poem on astronomy, *Phaenomena* (c. 300 B.C.), line 5, in order to show the special relationship in which men stand to God. The argument in v. 29 is that since men are the γένος of God, τὸ θεῖον cannot be like gold or silver or sculpture, which are the product of human skill and belong to a different γένος.<sup>46</sup>

The transition to the third section of the speech is formed by Paul's declaration that God has overlooked the times of their ἀγνοία (cf. Acts 14:16 and Rom. 3:25, "Because in His divine forbearance He had passed over former sins"). God now wishes to forgive the past.<sup>47</sup> Now is the time of decision: either for or against the living God. This God will act ἐν ἀνδρὶ ᾧ ὥρισεν. The Judgment by the Man whom God has set apart for that purpose is "a Judgment of the world in righteousness" (Psalms 96:13 and 98:9). The fact that this Judgment ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ will be effected by Christ, who has been raised from the dead, v. 31 b, now calls for faith and creates the possibility of repentance and new life.<sup>48</sup>

Our conclusions as to the possibility of a "natural theology" in this passage are similar to those which we drew from 14:15-17, for this passage is only a fuller development of the earlier speech. The fact that God made all men that they might seek Him and find Him and that He is nearer to each one of us than our own inner consciousness is not counterbalanced by Paul with the conclusion that therefore all men perceive Him in the creation. On the contrary, though God has given men the possibility to seek and find Him, man has done precisely the opposite. He has turned his worship to images and idols devised by his own artifice. The very fact, again, that Paul preaches μετάνοια presupposes that men are turned away from God. The very fact that the Man whom God ordained is risen from the dead presupposes that He came to turn men in their ἀγνοία back to God.

Before we turn to the examination of the specific "natural theology" and Natural Law passages in Romans, we ought to devote some attention to Paul's teaching about νόμος. Ever since Origen the opinion has been current in the Church that Paul meant to indicate the Mosaic Law by his use of the article with νόμος and that the anarthrous Pauline usage of νόμος posits a general Moral Law, that is, that moral section of the Mosaic Law — the Ten Commandments — which is known by all peoples outside of Israel: in other words, the Natural Law.<sup>49</sup>

In order to understand Paul's usage of νόμος we must study the meaning of the Hebrew word *Torah* and the usage of νόμος in the Septuagint, which translated the former with the latter. The original idea of the word *Torah* is that of a divine authority, whether that be in legal, cultic, political, or other forms. From this original root the meaning branched out in two directions: 1) *Torah* came to be the expression for the cultic instruction of the priests (Hag. 2:11, Mal. 2:6 ff.), and 2) it came to mean "instruction" in general, especially in the book of Proverbs. In Deuteronomy the meaning tends to become more restricted to the idea of a written law, but nevertheless the note of "instruction" remains. In the later Psalms and in Chronicles the entire Pentateuch is meant by *Torah*.<sup>50</sup> In rabbinical Judaism *Torah* means chiefly all the Mosaic Law as law. *Torah* also is used for the Decalog, and also means all of the Pentateuch. In most cases it is difficult to distinguish between *Torah* as "law" and as "Pentateuch." Materially, *Torah* becomes "law" by addressing itself to the human will. The extra-Pentateuchal books of the Old Testament were regarded as valid and authoritative only in so far as they explain the *Torah* (Pentateuch). God Himself is viewed as bound to the *Torah*. Since the purpose of the *Torah* is to show man that way of life by which he can gain God's approval, and since man can have life only by doing the *Torah*, the study of casuistry becomes important.<sup>51</sup> At the time of the translation of the Septuagint, the Hebrew word *Torah* had acquired this meaning, so that the word νόμος in the Septuagint always means *Torah* in the sense that the rabbis gave it.

This, then, is the basic meaning of νόμος for Paul: *Torah* as the post-exilic rabbis interpreted it. Furthermore, a number of examples show that for Paul there was no distinction between νόμος and ὁ νόμος. In Rom. 5:13, 20 anarthrous νόμος must refer



to the Mosaic Law, which entered the world at a particular time. In Gal. 3:23-24 first νόμος is used and then ὁ νόμος, with no distinction in meaning. The same phenomenon occurs in Rom. 2:23.<sup>52</sup> The lack of distinction between the two is perhaps most readily apparent in Rom. 2:13-14, where those who are ἐν νόμῳ are obviously Jews, who have the Mosaic Law, whereas τὰ μὴ νόμον ἔχοντα are the ἔθνη. Nevertheless, those who do not have νόμος do by nature τὰ τοῦ νόμου.<sup>53</sup> Paul had good precedent for the anarthrous use of νόμος in the Septuagint. In most places *Torah* referring to the Mosaic Law is translated ὁ νόμος. But νόμος occurs in many places.<sup>54</sup>

Paul never uses νόμος in the plural, as did Hellenistic Judaism, since not every moral or social-political regimen of a people has for him the character of the νόμος.<sup>55</sup> Thus Paul by νόμος and ὁ νόμος means the Law of Moses. "Das mosaische Gesetz ist das göttliche Gesetz schlechthin, also das allgemeine."<sup>56</sup> Of course, in Rom. 2:20 ff., 7:7, and 13:8 ff., νόμος is equivalent to the Decalog, but Paul makes no fundamental differentiation between the Decalog and the remaining Old Testament law material.<sup>57</sup> However, Paul's usage of νόμος differs from that of the rabbis in this, that for Paul νόμος is a living will which demands the actions of man, and so one "does" the Law (Rom. 2:25, cf. Gal. 5:3 and 6:13). Above all, Paul sees in the Law the living, demanding will of God; the Law is not an abstract principle between man and God, to which God is bound. Thus the Law speaks (Rom. 3:19); it works (Rom. 4:15); it has power (Rom. 7:1). One could even say that νόμος is equivalent to God as He reveals Himself in the Law.<sup>58</sup>

Finally, Paul does not distinguish in his usage of νόμος between an ethical core and the ceremonial husks. For Paul the whole Mosaic Law was given in all its parts by God (Gal. 2:12-16, 3:10, 5:3).<sup>59</sup>

Now we turn to the consideration of the two great "natural theology" and Natural Law passages in Romans. We begin with Rom. 1:18 ff. In vv. 16 and 17 Paul had announced the theme of the Epistle—that in the Gospel the righteousness from God is revealed, ἀποκαλύπτεται, from faith for faith. But Paul can speak of the revelation of the righteousness of God only when he at the same time proclaims that the wrath of God, ὀργὴ θεοῦ, is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of men. The

righteousness of God is revealed, *for* (γάρ) the wrath of God is revealed. We can summarize the thought of 1:18-32 thus:

1. God's wrath is revealed from heaven against the ungodliness and wickedness of men, v. 18.
2. This action of God is justified because men have the truth but suppress it by their wickedness, v. 18 b.
3. This truth, τὸ γνωστὸν τοῦ θεοῦ, God Himself has revealed to them, v. 19.
4. This revelatory process is mediated by the ποιήματα, the things which God has made. Through these ποιήματα men can grasp (νοούμενα) God's eternal power and deity, v. 20 a, b.
5. God has unmistakably revealed Himself in the creation for this express purpose, that men might be without excuse, v. 20 c.
6. That men are without excuse is shown by the fact that although they knew God (from His *Uroffenbarung*), they did not glorify and thank Him as God (the presupposition being that to know God is to acknowledge Him as sovereign Lord). On the contrary, although they had God's light, they deliberately darkened their minds and made themselves foolish, vv. 21-22.
7. They showed this by giving the glory they owe to immortal God to images representing creatures, v. 23.
8. Therefore God's wrath delivers them over to perversions, vv. 24 to 27, and to all manner of personal and social wickedness, vv. 28-31.

The fact that men deliberately turn away from God is re-inforced in v. 28 (καθὼς οὐκ ἔδοκίμασαν τὸν θεὸν ἔχειν ἐν ἐπιγνώσει), and that they are ἀναπολογήτους is sealed in v. 32.

Thus when one sees the full sweep of the passage and does not simply concentrate on vv. 19-20 stripped of their context, one can realize the fact that Paul here teaches no "natural theology" in the sense in which we have already defined it. Paul does not deny that God is known by men. However, men do not acquire this knowledge by themselves, by their own powers of speculation. It is God Himself who reveals His αἰδιος δύναμις καὶ θεϊότης to men. But men have deliberately, knowingly perverted this revelation of God and worshiped the creature rather than the Creator, v. 25. It is true that God passed over this human perversion of His revelation in the time before Christ.<sup>60</sup> But now that Christ has

come and God's righteousness has been revealed, His wrath lashes out over godless men.<sup>61</sup>

Of course, it is true that vv. 19-20 bear a good deal of resemblance to parallels from Hellenistic and Jewish-Hellenistic philosophico-religious writings, particularly to the proofs for the existence of God (from design or the *analogia entis*) in these writings. Many commentators therefore assert that Paul here borrows from the Aristotelian, Hellenistic, and Jewish-Hellenistic sources and recognizes the validity of Greek "natural theology." Sanday and Headlam state that v. 20 is the "argument from the nature of the created world to the character of its Author."<sup>62</sup> One of the frequently cited parallels in the Apocrypha is Wisdom of Solomon 13:1, 5:

But all men are by nature vain, in whom there is not the knowledge of God, and who by these good things that are seen, could not understand Him that is, neither by attending to the works have acknowledged who was the Workman. . . . For by the greatness of the beauty, and of the creature, the Creator of them may be seen, so as to be known thereby.

Sanday and Headlam also quote a sentence of Pseudo-Aristotle, a Stoic of the first century after Christ, which is seen in nearly every commentary: ἀθεώρητος ἀπ' αὐτῶν τῶν ἔργων θεωρεῖται [ὁ θεός] *De Mundo*, 6. C. H. Dodd<sup>63</sup> comments: "There is no other passage where Paul so explicitly recognizes 'natural religion' as a fundamental trait of human nature. . . . the created universe offers sufficient evidence of its 'divine Original.'"<sup>64</sup>

In his previously mentioned essay Günther Bornkamm delineates that chain of thought in the Hellenistic and Jewish-Hellenistic philosophical writers which seems to resemble that of Paul's argumentation. There are four steps. First, the structure of the world causes man to ask about its Creator and by his νοῦς to deduce the Creator's power from the glory of His work. This step corresponds with Rom. 1:20. In addition to the parallels cited above, we might quote here and in the following steps statements from Philo, the most important Jewish-Hellenistic writer of the period. Philo writes in *De Specialibus Legibus* I, 35:

For none of the works of human art is self-made, and the highest art and knowledge is shown in this universe, so that surely it has been wrought by one of excellent knowledge and absolute perfec-

tion. In this way we have gained the conception of the existence of God.<sup>65</sup>

Second, this knowledge of the Creator does not mean only the theoretical acknowledgment of the existence of a first cause, but also carries with it a knowledge of the νόμος — corresponding with Rom. 1:21, γνόντες τὸν θεόν, and 1:32, τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπιγνόντες. Philo writes in *De Praemiis et Poenis*, 41—43:

Others again who have had the strength through knowledge to envisage the Maker and Ruler of all have in the common phrase advanced from down to up. Entering the world as into a well-ordered city . . . struck with admiration and astonishment, they arrived at a conception according with what they beheld, that surely all these beauties and this transcendent order has not come into being automatically but by the handiwork of an Architect and World Maker; also that there must be a Providence, for it is a law of nature that a maker should take care of what has been made. . . . These no doubt are truly admirable persons and superior to the other classes. They have, as I said, advanced from down to up by a sort of ladder and by reason and reflection happily inferred the Creator from His works.

Philo's remarks in *De Opificio Mundi*, 3, also illustrate this second step:

His [Moses'] exordium, as I have said, is one that excites our admiration in the highest degree. It consists of an account of the creation of the world, implying that the world is in harmony with the Law, and the Law with the world, and that the man who observes the Law is constituted thereby a loyal citizen of this world, regulating his doings by the purpose and will of Nature, in accordance with which the entire world itself also is administered.

Third, therefore an obedient life and the worship of God belong to the true knowledge of the Creator (Rom. 1:21, οὐχ ὥς θεὸν ἐδόξασαν ἢ εὐχαρίστησαν). Fourth, the refusal of the true knowledge of God leads to idol worship and a dissolute life (Rom. 1:24 ff.). Philo says in *De Opificio Mundi*, 172:

He that has begun by learning these things with his understanding rather than with his hearing, and has stamped on his soul impressions of truth so marvelous and priceless, both that God is, and is from eternity, and that He that really *is* is One, and that He has made the world, and has made it one world, unique as Himself

is unique, and that He ever exercises forethought for His creation, will lead a life of bliss and blessedness, because He has a character moulded by the truths that piety and holiness enforce.

Of course, everyone admits that the ultimate presuppositions of the Hellenistic theology are at variance with those of Paul. The god at whom one arrived by traveling *κάτωθεν* -- *ἄνω* is the life principle of the world, the *νόμος κοινός*, the living power which is praised with wonderment and awe approaching ecstasy. Furthermore, the Stoic view has it that when man comes to know God and the Law, he comes to the knowledge of himself, which means that man merges himself with the harmony of the "All." For Philo, the Stoic *ὁμολογουμένως τῇ φύσει ζῆν* has its *τέλος* in communion with God, in the *ὁμολογία τῶν κατὰ βίον πράξεων*. Consequently, idol worship and immorality are the result of a lack of "understanding" and "knowing" God. Thus in the Jewish-Hellenistic view the aim of philosophico-religious teaching is to lead man from ignorance to the true knowledge of himself and of the divine cosmos.<sup>66</sup>

From this explication of the ultimate presuppositions of that chain of facts in Jewish-Hellenistic literature which seems to be similar to St. Paul's chain of argumentation in Romans we can now point out sharply the basic cleavages between the Pauline and the Philonic Wisdom pattern of thought. First, it is the purpose of the Hellenistic-Jewish theology to break down the *ἀγνοσία* of men and to awaken in men the knowledge of God which they already have in principle. This is done by means of the argument from design and the *analogia entis*, which is one of the decisive points in the philosophico-religious literature of Hellenistic Judaism. But for Paul the knowledge of God is not a possibility open to man, to choose for or decide against as he pleases, but it is the inexorable reality under which the whole world stands. "Nicht die ἀγνοσία θεοῦ ist das Zeichen der gottlosen Welt, sondern das Wissen um Gott."<sup>67</sup> Since the knowledge of God is a demanding reality for all men, Paul does not at all concern himself with the question of how this knowledge comes into being. He does not find the reason for the revelation of the Creator in this, that the cosmos is the *εἰκὼν* of God Himself, but in that God has so willed it: *ὁ θεὸς γὰρ αὐτοῖς ἐφάνερωσεν*, v. 19. The fact that God's in-

visible qualities are clearly perceived in the things that are made does not point to a speculative deduction on man's part, but only the recognition by man of God's power and deity, which are mediated through the ποιήματα.<sup>68</sup>

Second, it is significant that Wisdom 13:6 ff. hesitates between exonerating and blaming the heathen for going astray in their search for God. At any rate, their error is one of intellect and judgment, which was to begin with on the right track. But Paul does not see the reason for men's godlessness in that they erred in knowledge, but in this, that men fell away from God although they knew Him, γνόντες τὸν θεόν. Thus Paul frees the arguments and concepts which he has taken from contemporary philosophy and theology from the presuppositions of Greek thought and supplies them in a manner that is completely unique. This is clear also from the fact that, in addition to Stoic words and concepts, 1:18 ff. is filled with specifically Old Testament words and concepts.<sup>69</sup> The statement of Bornkamm goes to the heart of the matter:

Nicht um die Gotteserkenntnis als Frage und erschliessbare Möglichkeit geht es ihm, sondern um die Frage, ob diese Erkenntnis bewährt sei (1:28), ob die Wahrheit Gottes Wahrheit geblieben und ihr Macht gelassen sei (1:18, 25). So geht es ihm Röm. 1:18 ff. also gar nicht um die Enthüllung des göttlichen Seins, sondern um die Aufdeckung der menschlichen Existenz. Diese ist im Grunde verkehrt, weil der Mensch Gott nicht gedankt und ihn nicht gepriesen hat; darum ist ihr Herz der Eitelkeit der Gedanken und der Finsternis des unverständigen Herzens verfallen (1:21).<sup>70</sup>

A third difference lies in the positions taken by Philo and Paul as to the place of thanksgiving and praise to God in the religious life. Philo holds that praise of God is the final stage of religiosity to which man can attain. The ἐξομολογητικὸς τρόπος is completed in ecstasy. But εὐχαριστεῖν and δοξάζειν for Paul are the practical implementation by man of his knowledge of God.<sup>71</sup>

A fourth difference lies in the attitudes of Paul and the Jewish-Hellenistic writers toward heathen idolatry. The Hellenistic criticism calls heathen idolatry foolish because it is unreasonable. But Paul sees the error of idolatry and polytheism in this, that they are the result of man's rebellion against God. Because man has rebelled against God, he makes the creature creator and the Creator creature.



From this also comes the anarchy of their moral life. Although men changed the truth of God into a lie, nevertheless the truth of God remains standing over against the world. It is clear, then, that Paul does not speak of the truth of God in order to lead men to strive for it, for it is the very truth of God which delivers men over into their own self-chosen perversion. Paul's preachment of the revelation of God in creation is the assurance that man is completely lost.<sup>72</sup>

We have already had occasion in our investigation of Paul's use of νόμος to touch upon Rom. 2:14-16. In the first chapter Paul had lashed out at the godlessness and idolatry of the heathen Gentiles. In chapter two he directs himself to an imagined Jewish adversary who prides himself on his inclusion within the chosen people and his knowledge of the *Torah*. In the first eleven verses Paul shows that such pride is out of place, since God will render to everyone according to his works (v. 6); for there is no partiality with God, vv. 10-11. Vv. 12-16 make this pronouncement more explicit and concrete. What counts in the final Judgment is whether people — Jews or Greeks — have "done" the Law. Only the doers of the Law will be pronounced righteous. Mere instruction in, and knowledge of, the *Torah* means nothing (vv. 12-14).

Vv. 14 and 15 show why Paul can include the Gentiles under the category of ποιηταὶ νόμου. "When the Gentiles who have not the Law do by nature what the Law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the Law" (Revised Standard Version.) ἔθνη is anarthrous because Paul is not making a categorical statement about all Gentiles. "Ὅταν means "whenever." Thus Paul is positing a limited fulfillment of the Law by the Gentiles. We have already seen that the first three usages of νόμος in this passage do not refer to some general "moral law," but to the Mosaic *Torah*. But a great many expositors see Paul adopting the Stoic idea of Natural Law in this passage because of the words φύσει and ἑαυτοῖς εἰσιν νόμος (also συνείδησις in v. 15). So, for example, Lietzmann, Althaus, Sanday and Headlam, and Dodd. Althaus' remark is typical: "Es gibt dort [im Heidentum] einen natürlichen Trieb zum Guten, der auf ein 'Naturgesetz' zurückweist."<sup>73</sup> In addition to the passages dealing with Natural Law which we have already cited, it might be useful to add the following:

The cultivated and free-minded man will so behave as being a law to himself. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1128.

Chrysippus says: "οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν εὐρεῖν τῆς δικαιοσύνης ἄλλην ἀρχὴν οὐδ' ἄλλην γένεσιν ἢ τὴν ἐκ τοῦ Διὸς καὶ τὴν ἐκ τῆς κοινῆς φύσεως. Ἐντεῦθεν γὰρ δεῖ, πᾶν τὸ τοιοῦτον τὴν ἀρχὴν ἔχειν, εἰ μέλλομέν τι εὐρεῖν περὶ ἀγαθῶν καὶ κακῶν." Plutarch, *De Stoicorum Repugnantia*. Lex est ratio summa insita in natura, quae iubet ea quae facienda sunt, prohibetque contraria. Cicero, *De Legibus* I, 6:18.

However, in my opinion, it is going entirely too far to squeeze from 2:14 a developed "natural theology" or Natural Law. In the first place, the entire pantheistic world view of the Stoics, according to which λόγος, φύσις, νόμος, νοῦς, and God blend into one another imperceptibly, is foreign to Paul's concept of God, man, and the world. In the second place, Paul could well have consciously or unconsciously borrowed the Stoic word φύσει and yet filled it with his own thought, so that φύσει can mean simply that Gentiles do what the *Torah* requires by virtue of what they find in themselves.<sup>74</sup> In the third place, Paul's statement that the Gentiles who do what the Law requires are ἑαυτοῖς νόμος is a paradoxical statement, since he at the same time maintains that they do not have the Law. I interpret this fourth νόμος in v. 14 to mean this: "Although the Gentiles, who do what the Law requires, do not have the Law, nevertheless, as far as they are concerned, they are the Law for themselves." That is, when they do what the Law requires, they are the Law.<sup>75</sup>

The interpretation of verse 16 poses a difficult problem, for it is not clear with which preceding verse this description of the final Judgment by Christ is to be taken. Many expositors connect v. 12, οἱ ποιηταὶ νόμου, directly with v. 16, ἐν ᾗ ἡμέρα κτλ. This solution, of course, leaves vv. 14 and 15 dangling in the air. It seems difficult to connect v. 15 with v. 16, since v. 15 appears to refer to actions going on at the present time (ἐνδείκνυνται, συμμαρτυρούσης, etc.). Yet I believe the best solution lies in taking them together. The Gentiles will do these things—these things will come to light—on the day of Judgment through Christ Jesus. The οἵτινες of v. 15 is a "relative of quality" denoting the specific antecedent (i. e., those Gentiles who do what is required by the Law) and giving a causal

tone to v. 15. The Gentiles are the Law to themselves since they show forth the work of the Law written on their hearts . . . on that day. It is to be carefully noted that Paul does not say that the Law is written on their hearts; he rather says that *the work of the Law* is written. This ἔργον does not mean the "effect of the Law" or the "trace of the Law," but the "concrete, specific work demanded by the Law in a particular situation."<sup>76</sup> Again it is to be remembered that the entire point of departure in this context is that the doing of the Law by the heathen is contrasted with the knowledge of the Law by the Jew. This phrase is convincing proof that Paul did not have in mind the Stoic Natural Law. Since for Paul and the other writers of the Bible, God is the living, ever-active God, the γραπτόν does not refer to some timeless principle which is inscribed "by nature" or "by birth" on the being of man. Rather, it is God Himself who has written the ἔργον τοῦ νόμου on man's heart. Thus, the Gentile does not draw on some abstract moral principles when confronted by the necessity of an ethical choice, but God Himself has written on his heart what he should do in that particular situation. It should also be noted that the ἔργον τοῦ νόμου is γραπτόν ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις, not on the νοῦς or the ἐπιστήμη. In fact, it is not surprising that it is the καρδιά in which God's will is witnessed to the heathen, for in Biblical usage the heart is the inmost part of man and the point from which springs his action.<sup>77</sup> Καρδιά and "man" cannot be separated. If the ἔργον is written on the καρδιά, this means that man as a whole, from inside out, is called upon to do God's will.

The genitive absolute of v. 15 b, c describes in detail what happens when that which is written on the hearts of the Gentiles becomes manifest. According to one interpretation, the συμμαρτυρούσης αὐτῶν τῆς συνειδήσεως means that the conscience bears witness to and substantiates the work of the Law written in the heart.<sup>78</sup> Those who find Natural Law in this passage believe that the conscience bears witness to and therefore proves the existence of the Natural Law in the heart. However, in this verse the συνείδησις is pictured as a witness which is separated from the self and which passes judgment on the actions of the self. Συνείδησις is "co-knowledge," "the knowledge or reflective judgment which a man has *by the side of*, or *in conjunction with*, the original consciousness of the

act."<sup>79</sup> Thus the conscience is not the source of moral obligation, as in modern thought. The words of Rom. 9:1 b show that this description of συνείδησις is correct: συμμαρτυρούσης μοι τῆς συνειδήσεώς μου ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ, where the conscience is portrayed as standing over against the ego of Paul.

Although many interpreters believe that the clause μεταξὺ . . . ἀπολογουμένων refers to the conflicting thoughts within an individual person, it would seem difficult for the conflicting thoughts of one conscience to act "between one another," μεταξὺ ἀλλήλων, as Schlatter remarks. The following sentence would therefore seem to reproduce Paul's thought more closely: On the Day of Judgment the Gentiles will give voice to their thoughts by accusing or excusing one another. The meaning of verse 15, then, is simply this: On the Last Day, in the Judgment, the Gentiles will show that what the Law requires has been written on their hearts when their conscience stands over against their own ego and passes judgment on what they have done, and when the Gentiles accuse or else exonerate one another.

Thus the Stoic concept of Natural Law and natural theology is not to be found in Romans 1 and 2. This is not to deny with Karl Barth any revelation of God at all outside Jesus Christ. For these chapters assert emphatically that God is ever-living and active, and confronts men with His truth and His will at all times. However, these passages in Romans 1 and 2 are integral steps in the unified structure of this first great section of Romans, 1:18—3:20. Both Jews and Gentiles are under the judgment of God because they have made of His revelation an intellectualistic deduction from the nature of the universe and have not understood it obediently as His word directed personally to them. The Gentiles have done this by exchanging the glory of God for that of the creature; the Jews, by making themselves the proud possessors of the Law.<sup>80</sup> Thus the purpose of 1:18—3:20 is to show that it is the revelation of God in creation which condemns the whole world, "so that every mouth may be stopped and the world may be held accountable to God" (3:19 b).

### III

Since this is first of all a study in Biblical exegesis and theology, it is not our concern to take a detailed position for or against the three views in the current ecumenical discussion listed at the end

of Section I. Such an effort, which would also include an independent attempt to indicate the relevance of Biblical theology for the Church's message in the midst of the present international disorder, must be left to further studies. Nevertheless, on the basis of the results of our investigation, we must note that any attempt to subsume portions of the Biblical message under the category of Natural Law and to make these the basis of international law is involved in a basic misunderstanding of Biblical theology. It is obvious, then, that future theological thought in this area has a difficult task before it: to avoid both the Scylla of making a new law out of the Gospel and the Charybdis of the "compartmentalization" between the Church and the problems of the world and the consequent meaninglessness of the Church's message for the world.

Jonesville, Ind., and Guatemala City

#### FOOTNOTES

1. James Luther Adams, "The Law of Nature: Some General Considerations," *Journal of Religion*, XXV (1945), 90.
2. *Ibid.*, 94.
3. For the material on Greek Natural Law I am indebted to Otto Piper, "What Is Natural Law?" *Theology Today*, II (January, 1946), 459—60, and Kleinknecht, "Nomos," *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, n. d.), IV, 1016 ff.
4. Piper, *op. cit.*, 462—3.
5. *Ibid.*, 464.
6. *Ibid.*, 464—5.
7. *Ibid.*, 466.
8. For a list of these books see John T. McNeill, "Natural Law in the Thought of Luther," *Church History*, X (September, 1941), 216—7.
9. *Ibid.*, 217.
10. Philip S. Watson, *Let God Be God: An Interpretation of the Theology of Martin Luther* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1949), pp. 112—3.
11. *Ibid.*, 110—6.
12. McNeill, *op. cit.*, 227. See also the whole section comprising 220—7.
13. Piper, *op. cit.*, 466—9.
14. John T. McNeill, "Natural Law in the Teaching of the Reformers," *Journal of Religion*, XXVI (1946), 172—5.
15. See the discussion of Melancthon on this point in the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, *Concordia Triglotta* (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 120. Note the additions of the German to the Latin text.
16. McNeill, "Natural Law in the Teaching of the Reformers," 176.
17. *Ibid.*, 180—1. Like Melancthon, Calvin equates  $\kappa\alpha\pi\omicron\lambda\omicron\gamma$  of Rom. 2:15 with "intellect."

18. Piper, *op. cit.*, 466—9.
19. Jaroslav Pelikan, *From Luther to Kierkegaard: A Study in the History of Theology* (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1950), 68.
20. Cf. Joh. G. Baier, *Compendium Theologiae Positivae* (St. Louis: Luth. Concordia-Verlag, 1879), I, 15, where Dannhauer is quoted to the effect that the *lex naturae* is *immutabilis et aeterna*.
21. Walter M. Horton, "Natural Law and International Order," *Christendom*, IX (1944), 16—8.
22. Cf. the opening sentences of the Declaration of Independence.
23. Horton, *op. cit.*, 18—20.
24. *Ibid.*
25. Piper, *op. cit.*, 469—71.
26. *Op. cit.*, 20.
27. Cf. also Piper, *op. cit.*, 469—71.
28. C. H. Dodd, *Gospel and Law: The Relation of Faith and Ethics in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951), p. 81. Also see Dodd's essay, "The Relevance of the Bible," in *Biblical Authority for Today: A World Council of Churches Symposium on 'The Biblical Authority for the Churches' Social and Political Message Today'*, edited by Alan Richardson and Wolfgang Schweitzer (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1951), 157—62.
29. *Biblical Authority for Today*, pp. 151—2.
30. Cf. Regin Prenter's essay *ibid.*, 108—11.
31. *Ibid.*, 153—4.
32. The use to which these Neo-Thomistic considerations are being put I have indicated above.
33. F. J. Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake, *The Beginnings of Christianity: Part I: The Acts of the Apostles* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1933), IV, 166.
34. H. J. Holtzmann, *Apostelgeschichte*, in *Hand-Commentar zum Neuen Testament* (Tübingen und Leipzig: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1901), I<sup>2</sup>, 94.
35. Lake, *op. cit.*, although the interpreters differ.
36. For the most complete discussion of the matter see *ibid.*, "Note XIX: The Unknown God," V, 240—6. For a concise summary of the evidence see F. F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles* (London: The Tyndale Press, 1951), 335—6.
37. Lake, *op. cit.*, IV, 215.
38. Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, 2:650: "Divom [divorum] natura . . . nihil indiga nostri." Cited by Holtzmann, *op. cit.*, 112.
39. This reading is found in Codex Bezae (the Western text), many unimportant uncials, the Byzantine tradition, and the Latin translation of Irenaeus. On the other side, Codices Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, and Alexandrinus, minuscule 13, other minuscules, and the Vulgate read simply ἐξ ἐνός.
40. Holtzmann, *op. cit.*, 111—4.
41. Hermann Wolfgang Beyer, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, in *Das Neue Testament Deutsch* (6. Auflage: Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1951), V, 107.
42. *Ibid.*, εὐρεῖν, v. 27, is a loose epexegetical infinitive, as is probably κατοικεῖν of v. 26.



43. Here the idea of immanence is added to that of divine transcendence, v. 24. Holtzmann, *op. cit.*
44. Lake, *op. cit.*, 217. "Das 'in ihm' von V. 28, das man auch hier mit 'durch ihn' übersetzen könnte, hat keinen tiefer mystischen Sinn als eben den echten des Wissens um die völlige Umschlossenheit alles Seins von Gott," Beyer, *op. cit.*, 108.
45. See Lake, *op. cit.*, V, "Note XX: 'Your own Poets,'" V, 246—51, for the rather complicated discussion of source.
46. *Ibid.*, IV, 218.
47. Beyer, *op. cit.*, 108.
48. *Ibid.*, 109.
49. William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, in the *International Critical Commentary* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, n. d.), 58.
50. Walther Gutbrod, "Nomos," *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, n. d.), IV, 1037—9.
51. *Ibid.*, 1046—51.
52. Eduard Grafe, *Die Paulinische Lehre vom Gesetz nach den vier Hauptbriefen* (Zweite verbesserte Auflage: Freiburg i. B. und Leipzig: Akademische Verlagsbuchhandlung von J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1893), 4—5.
53. "Zu beachten ist dieser Tatbestand [i. e., that anarthrous νόμος does not mean "a" law whereas ὁ νόμος would be "the" Law] etwa bei der Auslegung von R 2, 12 ff. ὅσοι πλ. sind nicht solche, die unter Vorhandensein irgend eines beliebigen Gesetzes gesündigt haben, sondern sind, im Gegensatz zu denen, die ἀνόμως ἡμαρτον (v. 12 a), Leute, die das eine göttliche Gesetz kannten u. doch sündigten. Die Heiden R 2:14: νόμον μὴ ἔχοντες, kennen das bestimmte atliche Gesetz nicht. Für den Gesichtskreis des Pls gab es wohl kein Volk, das nicht irgend ein Gesetz, wenn nicht gar ein rel sanktioniertes Gesetz hatte. Wenn diese Heiden von Natur, dh also ohne das offenbarte Gesetz zu kennen, Taten vollbringen, die von diesem geboten sind, dann sind sie damit ἐαυτοῖς νόμος: sich selbst nicht 'ein' Gesetz, sondern 'das' Gesetz. Würde hier νόμος ohne Artk eine Verallgemeinerung des Gesetzesbegriffes in sich schliessen, so fiele der Gedankengang auseinander," Gutbrod, *op. cit.*, 1062.
54. For passages in which νόμος is used both with and without the article cf. Joshua 8:31-32, 34; Ps. 118; 2 Chr. 34:14-15; Dan. 9:11. Jesus Sirach uses νόμος in referring to the Mosaic Law without the article: 19:18; 21:11; 31:8; 32:1; 35:15, 23; 36:2; 45:17. See especially 36:3 for both with and without article. Grafe, *op. cit.*, 6—7.
55. In Rom. 5:13-14 Paul says that νόμος did not exist between the time of Adam and Moses. This shows that the only νόμος Paul knew was the Mosaic code.
56. Grafe, *op. cit.*, 4.
57. Gutbrod, *op. cit.*, 1061. It is also true that at times νόμος means for Paul the Pentateuch: Gal. 4:21; 1 Cor. 14:34; Rom. 3:21. In 1 Cor. 14:21 νόμος is even used for the entire Old Testament. In Rom. 3:27; 7:21, 23, 25; 8:2; 9:31 νόμος has the meaning of "norm." Grafe, *op. cit.*, 7—11.
58. Gutbrod, *op. cit.*, 1061—3.
59. Grafe, *op. cit.*, 11—12.
60. Acts 14:16 and 17:30 and Rom. 3:25.
61. Cf. Günther Bornkamm, "Die Offenbarung des Zornes Gottes," *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, XXXIV (1935), 239—62.

62. *Op. cit.*, p. 43.
63. *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, in *The Moffatt New Testament Commentary* (New York and London: Harper and Brothers Publishers, n. d.), 24.
64. Hans Lietzmann lists a number of parallels from Plato, Philo, Cicero, etc., in *Die vier Hauptbriefe des Apostels Paulus*, in *Handbuch zum Neuen Testament* (Tübingen: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1910), III<sup>1</sup>, 8. The following parallel to νοούμενα of v. 20 is from Plato's *Republic* VI, 507:6: τὰ μὲν δὴ ὁρᾶσθαι φαμεν, νοεῖσθαι δ' οὐ, τὰς δ' αὖ ἰδέας νοεῖσθαι μὲν, ὁρᾶσθαι δ' οὐ.
65. These and the following translations from Philo are those of the *Loeb Classical Library*.
66. This paragraph is a summary of Bornkamm, *op. cit.*, 245—8. Wisdom 13 also contains statements on the foolishness of idol worship and the judgment of God which is visited on the heathen in the very midst of their idol worship.
67. Bornkamm, *op. cit.*, 249.
68. The word νοούμενα does not connote "the eyes of understanding" in the Platonic sense. Paul does not speak of Platonic ideas but of events and phenomena which God's power causes: Adolph Schlatter, *Gottes Gerechtigkeit: Ein Kommentar zum Römerbrief* (Stuttgart: Calwer Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1935), 58. See also the comments of Anders Nygren, *Commentary on Romans*, translated by Carl C. Rasmussen (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, c. 1949), 102—9.
69. ὁργὴ θεοῦ, v. 18; ἀσύνητος καρδία (not νοῦς), v. 21; ὁ πτίσας, v. 25 (not τεχνίτης, Wisdom 13:1, or γενεσιουργός, 13:5).
70. *Op. cit.*, 251.
71. *Ibid.*, 252.
72. *Ibid.*, 252—6.
73. *Der Brief an die Römer*, in *Das Neue Testament Deutsch* (6. verbesserte Auflage; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1949), VI, 21.
74. For this interpretation of φύσει see Schlatter, *op. cit.*, 90. The following remarks are also pertinent: "Die Ueberlegung, auf welche Weise dieser Heide dazu kommt, Gottes Willen zu erfüllen, liegt hier ferne. Durch das φύσει V. 14, soll einfach festgenagelt werden, dass die Erfüllung nicht auf dem Weg des geoffenbarten Mosaischen Gesetzes, sondern auf irgend einem andern Weg geschieht. Aber gerade dieser andere Weg ist nicht in eine Systematik hineinzupressen, weder in eine Systematik der 'natürlichen' noch einer 'antinatürlichen' Theologie," Christian Maurer, *Die Gesetzeslehre des Paulus nach ihrem Ursprung und in ihrer Entfaltung dargelegt* (Zürich: Evangelischer Verlag A. C. Zollikon, 1941), 38—9.
75. Schlatter, *op. cit.*, 90. Cf. also Maurer, *op. cit.*, 39, and Nygren, *op. cit.*, 123—4.
76. Schlatter, *op. cit.*, 90: "What is written in them says 'Do this.'"
77. For this and the following sentences I am indebted to Walter Gutbrod, *Die Paulinische Anthropologie* (Stuttgart-Berlin: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1934), 73.
78. E. g., Althaus, *op. cit.*, 21.
79. Sanday and Headlam, *op. cit.*, 60, give an excellent discussion of the Biblical usage of συνείδησις.
80. Bornkamm, *op. cit.*, 258.

# HOMILETICS

## Outlines on Synodical Conference Epistles

### SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

ACTS 6:1-7

A working faith is one that regards and meets the total needs of all its fellow men. And our text gives us

#### AN APOSTOLIC EXAMPLE — IN CARING FOR THE NEEDS OF OUR FELLOW MEN

*I. It is evident from the Apostolic example of our text that to meet the needs of the soul is to supply the greatest need*

- A. To be worldly-minded, concerned for the needs of the body and of life, is the general thing. (Men slave for and labor for security in this life: work and family first; savings, home, and possessions first; Matt. 6:32.)
- B. In moments of danger men frequently acknowledge the higher values. (The jailer at Philippi, Acts 16:30; soldiers on fields of battle and in hospitals as reported by our chaplains; personal experiences of men indifferent until life began to be endangered.)
- C. Christ often had called attention to the importance of the eternal values. ("What is a man profited if he shall gain" etc., Matt. 16:26; "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God" etc., Matt. 6:33; "One thing is needful," Luke 10:42; Mary hath chosen the better part.)
- D. Our text offers to us the example of the Apostles, who regarded the ministry of the Word and prayer to have the pre-eminence (Acts 6:2, 4).
  1. Background — the Greek-speaking Jews in conflict with the Hebrew-speaking Jews over a so-called inequitable distribution of certain funds to be used for those in need, widows and others who needed physical or social or financial help, v. 1.

2. The Apostles held that, important as this work is, it ought never be allowed to hinder the more serious work of ministering to the spirit of man, vv. 2 and 4.
  3. In order that this work may not hamper their labors, they called for an assembly of all the disciples to keep these matters in their proper place, v. 2.
- E. We, too, must recognize the greater needs of the soul, hence we ought not to permit extraneous matters to draw away our pastors and teachers from their first work. (Settling questions of inheritance, dividing the congregational budget; participating in community work, delinquency projects on the purely social level, are all vital but can never be permitted to hinder the chief work of their calling. Synods must always keep these same standards.)
- II. *The Apostolic example reminds us, however, that to meet the needs of the body and of life, is nevertheless an obligation that must be met with equity*
- A. God acknowledges man's need of material things.
1. He personally provided for His people in the wilderness with water and food and healing. He fed His prophets and clothed His people even as "He maketh his sun to rise" etc., Matt. 5:45.
  2. Jesus: "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have *need of all these things*," Matt. 6:32, and taught that to meet just these needs will be especially acknowledged in the Judgment: "A cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple," Matt. 10:42; "I was an hungered," etc., Matt. 25:35.
- B. The Apostles did not evade or minimize this work.
1. They called together a special meeting of all the disciples and aroused the whole church to recognize and meet these needs adequately.
  2. They saw to it that outstanding men were chosen to assume the responsibility for this work, that it might be done with equity (James 2).
- C. We cannot neglect our responsibilities here either. (Hence besides preaching and teaching and mission work, the personal

care for those in need, in our neighborhood; through local charities; or through church-controlled charities.)

*Conclusion:* As we behold the love of God towards us, so beautifully described in John 17:23, 26; caring for our needs, both spiritual and physical (forgiving our sins, supplying our needs), despite our unworthiness; may His love truly be in us towards others. Amen.

Chicago, Ill.

THEODORE F. NICKEL

## EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

### 2 THESS. 3:1-5

Content: The text introduces the closing admonitions of Paul to the Thessalonians. *To loipon, was noch uebrig bleibt*, finally. The Apostle had commended the Thessalonians for their steadfastness in spite of persecution, 1:4-5, comforted them in their tribulations, 1:6-10, and especially instructed them concerning the second coming of Christ, about which they had been misinformed and which had led to confusion and disorderly conduct in the congregation, chapter 2. But paramount in the Apostle's thinking is the preaching of the Gospel. This work must go forward at all costs. Therefore Paul asks the Thessalonians to pray (cf. Col. 4:3; 1 Thess. 5:25) that the Word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified. *Trechee*, run; cf. Is. 52:7; Eph. 6:15: the Gospel is associated with feet and with running—a vivid picture of the rapid, unhindered, far-reaching spread of the Gospel. There is also a note of urgency. The Word is glorified when it is believed, i. e., Christ, the heart of the Gospel, is glorified. This is, of course, the work of the Holy Spirit. Cf. John 16:14; 14:26; 15:26.

In order that the preachers of the Gospel may continue their blessed work, the Christians are exhorted to pray for their deliverance from unreasonable and wicked men. *Atopos*, out of place, depicting an attitude contrary to what is right. *Poneeros*, actively wicked. Such opposition was common and not surprising, "for all men have not faith." Always the life-giving Gospel becomes to many a savor of death unto death, 2 Cor. 2:16; cf. John 3:18; 9:29.

"But the Lord is faithful." The Lord's faithfulness is the basis for the believers' constancy and security. Because of God's promises

the believers may count on God's omnipotence and love to keep them firm and to guard them from the evil one. *Tou poneerou*, best taken as masculine, referring to Satan himself. He is the instigator of all evil that assails the Christians. But the almighty God will stand guard.

Trust in this divine protection produces true Christian optimism as regards both the present and future actions of the Christians at Thessalonica and in every Christian congregation.

V. 5: A capsule description of motive and method for all church work. The love of God and the patience of Christ. Some take *Theou* and *Christou* as objective genitives, which would focus attention on the Christian's attitude toward God and his patient waiting for Christ's return. It is better, however, to take the genitives subjectively. When the love of God fills our hearts, we are given the strength and zeal to bear affliction and to do the Lord's work, and the patience which Christ has with us encourages and comforts us in our work.

*Summary:* The real work of the Church is that "the Word of the Lord may have free course," regardless of world or community or congregational crises and problems. At all times, under all circumstances, it is the task of the Christians to spread the Word (cf. the Collect for the Church: "that Thy Word, as becometh it, may not be bound, but have free course and be preached to the joy and edifying of Christ's holy people"), to pray for its success, to work faithfully according to God's direction, and to trust firmly in His love, guidance, and protection. The results may well be left in the hands of the Lord of the Church.

*Outline:* The church year is running its course; the world is rushing to its dissolution; Satan's climactic onslaughts against the Church. Thoughts suggested by the eschatological emphases of Thessalonians. What of the Church? Text shows

#### CHRISTIANS IN ACTION IN THESE LAST DAYS

##### I. *Christians Trust Firmly in God*

- A. The sober realization of the power and viciousness of the opposition and of their own helplessness. (Collect: "Without Thee we are not able to please Thee.")
- B. Joyful confidence in God's sustaining power and protection.



## II. *Christians Pray Fervently and Confidently*

- A. That the Word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified;
- B. That they may be delivered from Satan's attacks.

## III. *Christians Do the Lord's Work*

- A. Constantly and devotedly;
- B. According to the Lord's will (Collect: "That Thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts");
- C. Motivated by the love of God;
- D. Comforted and encouraged by the patience of Christ;
- E. That the saving Gospel may be brought to all people (Gradual: "Oh, praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise Him, all ye people"), Hymn 494:4.

Sheboygan, Wis.

H. J. A. BOUMANN

## NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

COL. 3:1-10

*Introduction:* The message of this text must be considered in the light of the chapters preceding it. Judaizing errorists had come to the Colossians, teaching that certain Law works ("Touch not, taste not, handle not," 2:21) and ceremonies were essential to Christianity. Paul says that Christians who are dead with Christ to the rudiments of the world do not need such pestering decrees. They have "received Christ Jesus the Lord," 2:6. They are "rooted and built up in Him and stablished in the faith," 2:7.

Prohibitionists and legalists are still found. Judaism, Romanism, and pietistic Protestantism are full of the errors Paul condemns. We must be careful not to judge true Christianity by false and legalistic standards. The true Christian life is not one of merely observing rules and regulations.

## THE TRUE STANDARD OF CHRISTIAN LIFE AND CONDUCT

### I. *The True Christian Sets Affections on Things Above*

- A. He is risen with Christ. He lives in Christ and by faith shares His resurrection.

- B. Even though he is on earth, he thinks and seeks the things above, where Christ is.
- C. It takes effort, because our physical and spiritual vision is so earthbound. Hence the repeated exhortations here.
- D. He is dead with Christ, away from the elementary things of the world. Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12, 20. (See Lenski's Commentary for explanation of this mystical phrase.)
- E. Christian life with Christ is now hidden, but later manifest with glory, vv. 3-4; 1 John 3:2. It is a mystical union of the believer with Christ.

*II. The True Christian Mortifies His Members, Which  
Are upon the Earth*

- A. He breaks with the old vices. His dead members are incapable of being used for old sins. They are useless instruments of the flesh.
- B. The list of vices (see also Eph. 5:3-6)
  - 1. The four sexual sins.
  - 2. Covetousness which is idolatry.
  - 3. A second list in v. 8 — How especially susceptible we are!
  - 4. Lying is named separately in v. 9.
- C. Put off the old man (Eph. 4:22)
  - 1. The old man is derived from Adam.
  - 2. He continues to vex us.
  - 3. By God's grace in Christ working in us we put him off.
- D. Mortification of members is completed by putting on the new man, Eph. 4:24.
  - 1. This is not a separate act, but simultaneous with putting off the old man, like a crab that gets a new shell in losing the old.
  - 2. God creates the new being.
  - 3. The new man is after the image of God.
    - a. Restoration of the whole divine image begins in this life.
    - b. Complete restoration of the divine image is above, where our affection is.

*Conclusion:* The true Gospel standard of Christian life and conduct is opposed to all false standards. It rests on the power and force of God's Holy Spirit, not the deeds of men.

Baltimore, Md.

GEORGE H. SOMMERMEYER

## TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

1 JOHN 1:5—2:2

In Gen. 5:24 Enoch's walking with God is mentioned. Heb. 11:5 tells us that he walked right into heaven without seeing death. Like Elijah, those who have become sons and daughters of God through accepting Christ's forgiveness also enter into bliss but through the door of death.

The joys of heaven are not the only blessings of faith. We also have the happiness of walking with God throughout the days of this earthly life. This is a real privilege.

### THE BLESSEDNESS OF WALKING WITH GOD

It is blessed because

#### *I. This Is Our Heritage as Sons of God*

- A. Adam and Eve walked with God until sin's middle wall of partition estranged God.
- B. Christ has restored us again to the status of children of God through His impeccable life and through His substitutionary suffering and death for us.
- C. Now we are restored once more to the relationship that Adam knew in the Garden.
- D. The joys it gives: peace of mind, assurance in trouble, comfort in sickness, and consolation in bereavement.
- E. But it is a challenge, too, to walk in the light. Text vv. 5-6. This is the proof of our being God's dear children. Chap. 2:3.

#### *II. God Enables Us to Walk with Him*

- A. Our own sinfulness a grave problem. "We daily sin much" in thought, word, deed in spite of our best efforts; sins of commission as well as of omission.

- B. The world and Satan are pitted against us with all their might to estrange us from God. Lead us to commit sin or attempt to make us believe that sin is not too vicious. This Epistle directed against Cerinthus and Gnostics, who claimed that they could do as they pleased without contamination. Today, too, men regard sin as a "natural" thing, as a "necessary development in attaining maturity." That man is essentially good is the belief of Unitarianism, Modernism, and Liberalism. More of this than we would like to admit exists also among Lutherans. Through keeping in touch with God in His Word we can avoid such pitfalls.
- C. But there is a state of grace possible through constant repentance and faith. First of Luther's 95 Theses. Text, v. 9. Confession is necessary. Illustrated from the burial of Franz Joseph. About to be laid to rest in the church of the Capuchins in Vienna with the Hapsburgs who had died before, a voice from within the church challenged the cortege: "Who is there?" One of the nobles responded: "His Serene Majesty Franz Joseph." The reply was speedily given: "I know him not. Who is there?" Once more one from the procession spoke: "The emperor of Austria and the apostolic king of Hungary." Again came the reply of the voice: "I know him not! Who is there?" Finally the answer came: "A sinful man who trusts only in the Lord for forgiveness." To this the voice within answered: "Him I know, let him enter." Not perfectionism, but constant forgiveness. Text, 2:2.
- D. Jesus Christ pleads for our forgiveness and strengthening in the faith. Text, 2:1. Growth in sanctification is the work of God in us through Word and Sacrament. Only by denying sin, through God's power working in us, can we have fellowship with Him. Text, 1:7. He is faithful and righteous, v. 9. True to His promise. He will forgive.
- E. Nothing in all the world can contribute so much to contentment and peace of mind.

### III. *Walking with God Enables Us to Benefit Humanity*

- A. This is a challenge to us to evangelize the world. Christ died not only for our sins, but also for the world's sin. Text 2:2. We cannot rest until everyone has been told. Tragic to let them

- die in sins that have been paid for, but whose remission has not been appropriated.
- B. Our "walking in light" is an incentive to those in darkness to investigate Christianity. Has always been a potent force in mission activity. Also helps to keep our fellow Christians whom we provoke thereby on the straight path.
- C. It gives us a wondrous fellowship with sons of God. This transcends every other earthly relationship. It moves us to sympathy, kindness, and every other form of brotherliness. Gal. 6:10. Together we walk to heaven.

*Conclusion:* Nothing more glorious nor more beneficial in all the world than "walking with God." The grave problems affecting our age would be ameliorated if the millions of Christians would walk closer with their God. We cannot effect full improvement at once. But while we can't do everything, we can do something. Your heritage, God's power working in you, and the world in which you live demand it.

San Francisco, Calif.

ARTHUR C. NITZ

## REFORMATION FESTIVAL

ROM. 1:15-16

Two major streams of events are clearly discernible in modern history: 1) A majestic river bringing Heaven's blessings to individuals, who drink of its waters, and to nations touched by it. It burst forth from its underground channels at the time of the Reformation. 2) A threatening, devastating torrent of unbelief. It began its modern course above ground about a century after the Reformation.

Our fear-stricken generation must uncover afresh the source of power which fed the stream of Reformation blessings, and must drink deeply again of its living waters. The stream is none other than

### THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

#### I. *The Heart of the Reformation*

A. The Reformation *began* when Luther discovered in the Bible the Gospel of Christ. It was not a mere negation. On the contrary, it protested because it had something to affirm. When Luther

was led to understand what the Apostle meant by "the righteousness of God," and when he by faith appropriated unto himself that righteousness, then the enslaved Luther stood up as a revived, liberated, energized child of God. Then the Reformation began.

B. The Reformation *progressed* as Luther, "not ashamed," preached and taught the Gospel of Christ. Not only was the Gospel of Christ the great stake in that tremendous battle of spirits called "the Reformation"; its divine power unto salvation was gloriously manifested. The Gospel of Christ was the throbbing heart of the Reformation. Through Luther's Gospel witness the old fountains of Israel forced an outlet through the rubbish of a millennium of human ordinances and traditions, and in a stream of Reformation blessings caused the waste places of the Church to burst forth again into flower.

## II. *The Divine Power of Our Evangelical Faith*

A. The Gospel of Christ is "the power of God unto salvation" also to us. It is the healing, uplifting, liberating power of God in our lives. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1). The Gospel supplies both motive and power to live holy lives, to render selfless service, and to bring glad sacrifices of gratitude and love. It is the divine power which hallows even our daily toil and transforms this world of sin and sorrow into a field for our love's labors.

B. Has the evangelical faith lost its power? If the Gospel's power is not evident in the lives of many, the cause must be sought in the fact that modern men and women, steeped in the spirit of materialism and love of sin, and resisting the Gospel's power, refuse to stand in a prayerful, living, and personal relationship of faith to the Christ of the Gospel.

D. The measure in which this is true also of us is the measure of the power and earnestness with which there comes to us today the Reformation call to repentance.

## III. *The Unfailing Promise of Victory*

A. Text. Here was Rome, at the zenith of its power, wealth, and worldliness. And here was Paul, with the pebbles of the Gospel



of the thorn-crowned Christ in his wallet. His confidence of Gospel victory over the Roman Goliath was not misplaced.

B. Also for Luther the Gospel of Christ was the promise of victory. In the Gospel truth that "*Christus Redemptor vivit*" Luther read the promise of certain and eternal victory. In an hour of temptation and grave concern for the Church, Luther went to his window and looked out to see the stars in the dome of heaven, supported by no visible pillars, held in their courses by the hand of the Lord. In faith he clung to the promise that the same almighty Hand shall uphold and preserve the Church of the Gospel against the gates of hell.

C. How does the future look to us? Will the threatening torrent of unbelief swallow up the Gospel stream of blessings? The Gospel of Christ is for us the unfailing promise of victory in the deepening darkness of the last days. It invites us to lift up our heads, for our redemption draweth nigh. Casting aside all fear, let us cheerfully, aggressively, and confidently perform our great and sober duties as evangelical Christians to hold aloft the Gospel light in the gathering shadows of sin and infidelity. Under the Cross of Christ the future is bright with promise.

St. Louis, Mo.

A. G. MERKENS

## THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

### HABENT FATA SUA LIBELLI

We like to see our friends receive favorable mention in the news of the day — and so, too, their writings. A recent issue of the *Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchenzeitung* (Berlin: April 30) brings a review of a reprint of Walther's *Die rechte Unterscheidung von Gesetz und Evangelium*, published by the Lutheraner-Verlag of Frankfurt a.M. and priced at only 4,80 DM. The reviewer (O. Perels) says: "This book is a precious gift to our Church. Its theme is once more in the center of discussion in our days. Leading into Scripture and following Luther as counselor, this book treats the subject in a very lively and practical manner. Today we might formulate the answers to some of the questions that are raised in a different way, but the great truths proclaimed by this eminent teacher of the Church must be received in their entirety. The book is not above the heads of non-theologians. Its teaching is anything but dead and irrelevant doctrine; it is proclamation of the living Word that molds our spiritual life." — Hardly had this observer finished reading this review when, perusing the *Christian Beacon* (*Bible Presbyterian*) of May 15, he found an editorial headed "The Church at War" and composed almost entirely of a reprint of pp. 265-266 of Dr. Dau's translation of Walther's book (*The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel*, Concordia Publ. House. See their Catalog, and read again Dr. A. Hult's appreciation of this distinguished book of our great teacher).

Some of our readers will be glad to learn that the Lutheraner-Verlag has also put back on the book market the collection of studies on the Standard Gospels edited by the late Dr. L. Fuerbringer (*Die Evangelischen Perikopen*. Price, 8 DM.) as well as the thirty sermons on free-texts written by Dr. W. Arndt under the title *Siehe, ich stehe vor der Tuer* (Price, 4 DM.) At various times younger preachers who must on occasion preach in German have inquired about published sermons in German that could be used as models in the present day for sermons intelligible to, and fruitful for, the kind of German audiences that our preachers here and there still address. We have pointed to this Arndt collection. It has been unobtainable in recent years, and we are happy to announce that it is again available.

Donald Gray Barnhouse, Presbyterian preacher widely known through

his religious broadcasts, is publishing the monthly magazine *Eternity*, now in its third volume. In the current issue (July, 1952) the editor writes a lengthy article entitled "Lutheran Contribution," in which he discusses no less than ten recent Concordia publications. He says: "During the past several months I have tried to spend at least an hour a day with the Luther theologians whose works I have described in the present paper." Some of us might profitably follow this Presbyterian's example. — E. G. Schwiebert's *Luther and His Times* gets this accolade from Barnhouse: "I believe that it is safe to say that this is the definitive biography of Luther." — The two volumes of centennial essays published under the title, *The Abiding Word*, get this praise: "Let me say right here that no other denomination in America could have produced such a series of essays, so uniformly fundamental, scholarly, clear, and simple, and Biblical throughout." One essay, however, proved a *skandalon* to the critic, the one entitled "The Evangelical Lutheran Church, the True Visible Church of Christ." Barnhouse writes: "While the essay does begin with the clear teaching that the real Church of Christ is invisible, it proceeds, with a psychology that is almost Roman Catholic, to declare a doctrine of an outward, visible church that is a true church, and then to equate that church with a single denomination which exists largely in the Mississippi Valley." Such "equation", of course, is made by the critic. The thesis of that objectionable essay is concerned with the problem of confessionalism. The Lutheran Church — a small segment of which is found in the Mississippi Valley — is the Church which is loyal to the Lutheran Confessions and is loyal because it holds that the doctrinal truths confessed in them before all the world for four centuries square with the clear teachings of Scripture. The Lutheran Church finds aberrations from these teachings of Scripture in the confessions of other church bodies. What right has a church to exist without confessional certainty and confessional loyalty? Charles P. Krauth put it this way: "No particular Church has, on its own showing, a right to existence except it believe itself to be the most perfect form of Christianity, the form which of right should be universal." Is that bigotry, or is it a question of faith's humble but cheerful Amen to God's voice in His holy Word? — Barnhouse has good words concerning Fahling's *Life of Christ*, deeming the historical part of the work well done, also concerning the first two volumes (covering the Four Gospels) of *The Devotional Bible*. "For a family that wishes to have a consecutive family worship subject, these volumes could be a very excellent guide." — As to C. H. Little's *An Explanation of the Book of Revelation*, the Philadelphia reviewer ex-

presses the wish that Concordia "had kept it off their list." This wish is understandable under Barnhouse's own "dispensational" and "pre-millennial" presuppositions. We, in turn, wish that he could find his way back to the position of Little, which, essentially, corresponds to that of his noted Princeton professor B. Warfield (briefly but adequately set forth in his essay "The Millennium and the Apocalypse," reprinted from the *Princeton Theological Review*, 1904, in *Biblical Doctrines*, New York, 1929). — Glowing words greet Dr. Behnken's Lutheran Hour sermons, *Mercies Manifold*. "I was delighted," says the reviewer, "to make the acquaintance of the mind of Dr. Behnken, and to see how true he is to the Word of God." Next, two paragraphs are given to Dr. J. Pelikan's *From Luther to Kierkegaard*, "a scintillating bit of philosophical writing." Finally, unstinted praise is awarded to the first volume in English of Dr. F. Pieper's *Christian Dogmatics*. Barnhouse says: "In this first volume, given largely to the doctrine of God and Man, I have had my soul refreshed and my mind stimulated at every turn. . . . It will be worth anyone's reading if he has a mind that does not shun the task of thinking." To which your observer says "Amen."

V. B.

#### THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE WORD OF GOD

The attention of the readers of the CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY has before this been drawn to the IntersVarsity Fellowship of Evangelical Unions in the British world. The aim of this Fellowship is to bring the Word of God to the students at the various universities of countries flying the British flag. It is a noble work, upholding the authority of the Scriptures in circles where all too often ridicule and contempt of the divine Word are uttered. This Fellowship issues a little magazine called *Inter-Varsity*, having the subtitle "A Christian Magazine for Students." In the issue for the Summer Term of 1952 the Rev. Alan M. Stibbs, vice-principal of Oak Hill College, London, submits an interesting little article having the title "The Infallibility of the Word of God." A few remarks on, and quotations from, this article will be welcomed.

The writer, in the first place, discusses the meaning of the word "infallible." When used of persons, as in the case of the Pope since 1870, the meaning, so Mr. Stibbs points out, is "incapable of erring." When used of things or statements, like the Bible and its words, the meaning is "not liable to fail," "sure," "certain." The authority cited for these definitions is *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*.

The writer next points out that from the historical point of view the second of these two uses is the earlier. He maintains that when some of the Protestant Confessions in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries use the word "infallible" with reference to the Bible, the meaning to be conveyed by the word "infallible" was that what the Bible says is certain and will undoubtedly come to pass. In that way, we are told, the word is used Acts 1:3, where, according to the King James Version, it is written that Jesus "showed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs." He quotes Archbishop Cramer's treatise *On the Lord's Supper*, where this scholar in speaking of Holy Scripture uses the words "wherein whatsoever is found must be taken for a sure ground and an infallible truth." He maintains that the Westminster Confession of the seventeenth century uses the word in the same meaning in the expression "the infallible truth and divine authority of Holy Scripture" (chap. 1).

Next our writer looks at the word in its fundamental sense. The parallel Greek forms for infallibility and infallible are ἀσφάλεια and ἀσφαλής, and the English translation which is employed is "certainty" and "certain." The passages where these words occur are Luke 1:4; Acts 21:34; 22:30; 25:26; Heb. 6:19. In the last-named passage the Authorized Version translates "sure." — In the following paragraph the writer looks at the concept from the theological point of view. The whole Bible teaches that God is reliable, that He can be trusted. Of human beings we say that they are changing and changeable, but the very opposite is true of our great God. Just as He does not change, so His Word cannot become antiquated or obsolete; "it cannot lose its worth and become valueless; it lives and abides (see 1 Pet. 1:23-25), it is always true and trustworthy." That is what is expressed in the word "infallible."

Continuing his discussion, our writer says that because God's Word has this quality, we can say of it that it will "never deceive or disappoint those who trust" in it. These words, however, must not be understood to mean that the Bible will in every case lead men to appropriate divine truth. We call the Bible "an infallible guide," but that must not be understood as saying that everybody who uses the Bible will arrive at the proper goal. "The Bible may be and has been misquoted to support error, and misused to mislead men. For there is nothing in the Bible taken by itself, to prevent men from using or understanding it wrongly." What the writer has in mind is the truth that Luther points to when he says that the Word of God is like a

beautiful flower, a rose, from which the bee extracts pure honey while the spider obtains poison from it. If the Bible is to be our guide leading us to the desired goal, then we actually have to use it as our guide in the true sense of the word, and that can be done only if the Holy Spirit enters our hearts, opens our eyes, and leads us to see the wonders of God's revelation. Our writer expresses it in this fashion: "In this connection its [that is, the Bible's] inherent and essential worth as the infallible Word of God only fully functions when it is the present means of communication between the illuminating Spirit and the responsive soul. Whether the understanding and the guidance actually gained by its use are true and trustworthy depends, not on the Bible alone, but on the Holy Spirit as the promised infallible Guide into all truth, and on the believing and conscientious obedience of the hearer to what the Spirit thus says to him."

Mr. Stibbs, however, must not be understood as if he intended to rob the Scriptures of their character as objective witnesses of divine truth. He does not belong to the theologians who say that the Bible is the Word of God only in a subjective sense, getting to be the divine Word when it is trustfully accepted by an individual. Speaking of his caution referred to a second ago, he says: "This admission, however, does not alter the fundamental fact that rightly understood the written Word of God has its own inherent and independent infallibility; and the concern of our evangelical forefathers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in speaking of the infallible truth of Holy Scripture was to assert their conviction that these writings afford a sure and unassailable — because God-given — ground of confidence, a ground which will never become insecure or let the believer down."

There is another remark which we have to quote. "Just as there are given facts of history in the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Christ, which are finished and incontrovertible, and to which we must look for salvation, because they have an unfailing or infallible value which is present and eternal, so there are once-for-all given Scriptures, similarly made ours by the special intervention and providence of God in history, to which we must turn for the only sure and certain light and understanding, promise, and hope." The confirmation of the infallibility of the Word, says Mr. Stibbs, comes through its fulfillment. Its prophecies will not fail. That is why St. Peter (2 Pet. 1:19) refers to the Scriptures as "the more sure word of prophecy." The final caution of Mr. Stibbs is very important: "Of this 'infallibility' we cannot



be assured by scientific investigation or logical demonstration. Ultimate faith in the reliability of Scripture is entirely a matter of knowing whom we have believed, and of resting on the faithfulness of God whose Word it is. It is entirely a matter of being assured by the witness of the Spirit of God that God has said it, and that because He has said it, it is sure of fulfillment, it cannot fail, it is, and always will be, true; it is in fact 'infallible.'" This last point cannot be emphasized too much. In apologetics we demonstrate that the arguments brought against the divine character of the Scriptures are not tenable. But such demonstrations do not as yet make a person accept the Bible as God's Word, for such acceptance the proper personal relationship between the Savior and us mortals is an absolute requisite. In speaking to us in the Scriptures God does not intend to acquaint us with abstract philosophical truth, but with the way of salvation. W. F. ARNDT

CALVIN, AN EXPOSITOR OF SCRIPTURE RATHER THAN  
A DOGMATICIAN

This is the thesis which Prof. Paul Traugott Fuhrmann, instructor in Church History, Gammon Theological Seminary, Atlanta, Ga., elaborates very interestingly and capably in *Interpretation, a Journal of Bible and Theology* (April, 1952). Of the first edition of Calvin's *Institutes*, published in 1536, he says: "Its essential aim was to unfold the teaching of Scripture" (p.205). Of the last (1559) he writes: "In Calvin's intention it was what moderns call an Introduction to the Bible and Guide to its understanding" (p.206). In his *Preface* to this edition Calvin writes: "The purpose of this final edition is to prepare theological students for the reading of the Word of God and so to instruct them that they may have an easy entry into Scripture" (*ibid.*).

Of Calvin's *Institutes* the essayist writes, in particular: "Calvin was not so set on the *Institutio* as one may imagine. . . . Calvin's *Institutio* was simply an aspect of his activity as a servant of the Word of God. This book, however, is a convenient point of reference for tracing the development of Calvin's thought and character. The 1536 *Institutio* is bare. Its inspiration and pattern are Luther's. It sets forth Calvin as a prophet in the raw. The early Calvin shows a sense of the love of God and speaks of ardent charity toward one's neighbor. He is hopeful, sustained, positive. The second edition (*Institutio* of 1539) differs by way of additions. Calvin has been in Strassburg, learned much from

Bucer and other Reformers, found a way between Luther and Zwingli, moderate and firm. His *Institutio* of 1541 further emphasizes the role of the Spirit, is more exact, always constructive and hopeful. Some of its pages are full of a mystic fervor for Jesus Christ, but we are unable to find some of these pages in the final edition. In 1559 we are in a different world and book. After the Peace of Augsburg, 1555, Calvin has to give up his hopes in the possibility of a Protestant victory in Europe as a whole. Calvin's friend Farel, the great warrior of the Lord, has hung his big sword on the wall and settled down to the point of getting married at the lively age of sixty-nine, in 1558. Calvin is now secure in Geneva, but he is opposed here and there, irritated by coarse men, and much abused by superficial minds unable to grasp the subtlety of his positions. Calvin is oppressed by all sorts of cares and consumed by illness. His last *Institutes* are therefore encumbered by polemical materials and bitter tirades. They no longer refer to the psalms as 'the prophets' but as 'the psalmist' or David. They evidence a greater appreciation of the earlier schoolmen. Rather than obedience to God, they now speak of 'piety' in a new sense."

In a concluding paragraph Professor Fuhrmann writes: "Ultimately Calvin means to gather us around a divine Person, not around a book. For, as he himself says, 'doctrine freezes unless vivified by God.' If Calvin expounds Scripture, it is to call us to mind the Word of God. We are gathered in God's presence — *coram Deo*. The imminence of the coming of the transcendent Son of Man at the Last Day is never forgotten. Full of eschatological grandeur, it forbids us to live as if Judgment were already past instead of yet to come. The actual presence of Christ as our Lord is full of present majesty and power. Christ is actually in our midst, invisible yet real, dominating the whole life of His church, which is His body and complement on earth. . . . Calvin's dream was the spiritual *imperium* of Scripture, that is, its universal sovereignty and dominion in the passing empires of this world" (208 f.). Here, we believe, is a new and illuminating aspect of Calvin's foremost reformatory objective which is worth considering. Compared with his *Institutes*, Calvin's exposition of Scripture certainly stands out as his major theological accomplishment.

J. T. MUELLER

#### JOHN DEWEY

The *Christian Century* (June 18, 1952) offers a helpful appraisal of John Dewey and his work. Perhaps the last paragraph is the most important.

"The spiritual life of America has suffered because the net effect of Dewey's influence was to strengthen secularism and to weaken real Christianity. One can still be grateful to him for freeing education by shattering ancient dogmas[?] and setting the child in the center for emphasizing the social mission of education and of citizenship. But there can now be little doubt that he strengthened the already strong tendency of a prosperous country to make temporal welfare the standard of success for both the individual and society. The result was the secularization of church as well as society, a loss of certainty and sense of mission, a creeping paralysis of hope, a decay of faith.

"Dewey's spiritual *laissez faire*, his limitation to the here and now of endless and aimless process, is simply not good enough for a generation which lives under the threat of communist aggression and atomic war. We have got to choose whom we will serve. We must decide on the goals of growth, the objects of expression, the meaning of existence. We know our decision must be made on faith, in obedient love to God, whom we know through Christ. We cannot face the future with the view Dewey expressed in 1928: 'I have no beliefs on the subject of personal immortality. It seems to be a subject, being one of continued existence, for science rather than philosophy, or a matter of physical evidence. If it can be proved, it would have to be along the lines of the psychical researches, and so far I haven't been much impressed with their results.'"

*America* (June 14, 1952) editorialized on his work, in a brief death notice, rather moderately, as a few statements may show: "Despite his pernicious pragmatism in philosophy and his one-sided exaltation of 'freedom' and 'doing' in educational theory, Dewey made some valuable contributions to the American—and indeed, to the world's—educational practices. Pope Pius XII in *Humani Generis* (1950) suggested that 'whatever new truth the sincere human mind is able to find' should be freed from error and incorporated into our heritage of Christian truth. . . . It is up to them [the people of America]—including all of us—to take the gloss off his pearly phrases and see what atoms of truth they might still contain." J. T. MUELLER

#### REGARDING PREDESTINATION

In the *Lutheran Outlook* (May, 1952) we find under the heading *Videant Consules*, a fascinating article on the doctrine of eternal election to salvation. What the writer says, is essentially correct. His is the *posteriori* view of predestination, which he describes in the follow-

ing words: "There stands a cross on a hill: Golgotha. God placed it there for me. Yea, the Bible takes me farther back. It was even in eternity that God took me, even me, lovingly to His heart and planned in detail what He would do for me and to me and in me. I owe it to this predetermined divine plan that I am a Christian today. And the same gracious God will, without any question, perfect and complete what He has begun, even in eternity. . . . Nothing can separate me from the love of God in Christ Jesus!"

The writer very emphatically rejects the Calvinistic bifurcate election. He repudiates also the theory of election in view of foreseen faith. He finally directs himself against those who ask: "Why are the ones predestinated *in preference to* the others?" This question he rightly rejects as unscriptural. At this point, however, he introduces an explanation which does not clarify the matter and, besides, which is not true to fact. He says we ask: "Why some before others?" because "we Occidentals do not think and speak as the Bible does. We must by all means adapt our thinking to that of the Bible, to that of Paul, who was no Occidental, but an Oriental. The Oriental would not ask at all *from what* men are chosen, but *to what*. . . . Oh that we could get away from the Occidental 'choice, choosing' idea and what it includes, and learn to think as the Bible does. But then you have no real '*Wahl*,' we were often reminded. Indeed, there is no '*Wahl*' in the Occidental interpretation — Paul was an Oriental! We must needs adapt ourselves to the the Oriental language of the Bible!"

One deeply appreciates the writer's admonition to his readers to think and speak as the Bible does. But the mystery of predestination, which he wishes to clarify, cannot be explained by saying that Paul was an Oriental, and not an Occidental, so that he presented the doctrine of predestination from the Oriental point of view. As a matter of fact, St. Paul, because of his Greco-Roman cultural and educational background, was definitely Occidental, as also his Epistles with their real Occidental approach, their logical organization and orderly presentation of the subject matter, prove. Again, although the Bible does not teach an election in the sense of the predestination of some *in preference* to others — as in a political assembly where one candidate is elected and the other rejected — which, as the writer correctly says, is a Calvinistic way of looking at it, there nevertheless has been a definite election to salvation, a "*Wahl*" in the truest sense of the word, as the author himself says that every believer can and should say: "I owe it to this predetermined divine plan that I am a Christian today."

J. T. MUELLER

## BRIEF ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

The Norwegian Bible Society delivered the 5,000,000th copy of the Scriptures. 1,000,000 Bibles were distributed in the first 86 years of the Society's existence—1816 to 1902. During the 50 years since 1902, 4,000,000 copies were distributed. . . . The population of Norway is only 3,000,000. \* \* \*

Evangelist Billy Graham who was holding revival services in Houston, Tex., was asked to speak at the Council of Motion Picture Organizations Conference, a national convention which attracted almost 1,000 movie executives and theater managers. He began his talk by saying, "I don't know why you invited a minister to speak unless your conscience is bothering you." He appealed to them to raise the moral standards of the movie industry since a large share of the responsibility for what happens to America rested on their shoulders. "Motion pictures are the biggest single factor in shaping American life," he said. "Our country is going to go almost the way you want it to go." He called on the film executives to expose Communism, continue to put "old-fashioned Americanism" on the screen, emphasize racial tolerance, dramatize this country's democratic processes, and de-emphasize sex and crime. \* \* \*

The 75th German "Katholikentag" will be held in the East and West sectors of Berlin from August 19 to 24. For the first time a woman will be the chairman of the observances, Mrs. Hedwig Klausener, widow of the prominent Berlin Catholic Action leader, Dr. Erich Klausener, who was killed by the Gestapo in 1934. Some 200,000 German Catholics are expected to attend. \* \* \*

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (Southern), meeting in Charleston, W. Va., adopted a resolution condemning lowered national morals and emphasizing that moral recovery in this country must begin in the home. Parents must "transmit high religious and moral standards" to their children by Christian example and training; children so trained will have integrity in later life, while playing basketball, taking college examinations, or functioning as government employees. The report said: "Disregard of the basic standards of honesty and integrity and the loss of a clear distinction between right and wrong have come because many citizens of our country, although nominally believing in God, actually do not have a sufficient sense of God's reality to affect their lives. The problem is basically spiritual. The Church has a tremendous responsibility in this

matter. If the Church does not accept leadership in reawakening men's faith in God, it need expect no one else to do it."—How much greater the guilt of a Church when through its ministers it even helps to undermine Christian consciousness in their members by their liberal, material teaching!

\* \* \*

The Synod of the Old Prussian Union Church (including the regional State Churches of Berlin-Brandenburg, Province Saxony, Pommerania, Silesia, Rhineland, and Westphalia) adopted a new order approving and regulating the ordination of women as pastors. The order stipulates that women, after their ordination, will have the same rights as their male colleagues and will be authorized in principle to preach and to administer the Sacraments. In practice, however, women will normally be restricted to positions for which they are particularly fitted, such as leadership of women's, youth and children's work, Sunday schools, Bible reading groups, and pastoral care of women in prisons and hospitals. They will be appointed pastors of churches only in special cases to be decided upon by the Church management.

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During the 93d annual convention of the Augustana Lutheran Church at Des Moines, Iowa, a special anniversary service was held in recognition of the eleventh anniversary of the "Day of Mourning" for the three Baltic nations—Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania—now under Soviet rule. . . . It was the night of June 13—14 in 1941 when Russian occupation authorities launched a mass deportation that sent more than 100,000 Latvians, Estonians, and Lithuanians to the arctic regions of the Soviet Union, to Siberia, and to Central Asia. . . . By request of the Latvian members of the host congregation, First Lutheran Church, prayers were said for those who "are suffering the tortures of slavery in labor camps behind the Iron Curtain," also memorializing "those who have broken down under Communist power and have found their eternal rest in unknown and widely scattered graves." . . . After the anniversary service, a delegation representing most of the 300 Latvian displaced persons who have been resettled in Des Moines presented the president of the Augustana Church, Dr. Oscar A. Benson, with a copy of *A History of Latvia*. Another copy of the book was given to the Rev. Ernest A. Lack, pastor of the local congregation, and to Dr. Paul C. Empie of New York, executive director of the National Lutheran Council, who was the speaker at the service.

The convention unanimously went on record in favor of amending



the Social Security Act to make clergymen eligible for Federal old age insurance. While exclusion of ministers from the provisions of the Act was based on "the pretext that including them would violate the principle of the separation of Church and State," in reality the denial to ministers of Old Age and Survivors' Insurance "would seem to be both discrimination against them as citizens and actually a refutation of the principle of separation of Church and State."

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A member of the medical staff of Washington (D.C.) Sanitarium, Dr. Clifford R. Anderson, speaking to the clergymen attending the annual Potomac Conference camp meeting of the Seventh-Day Adventists, warned ministers to guard their health, because far too many of them are breaking under the strain to which modern pastors are subjected. "Many ministers of the Gospel are wearing out too soon," he said. "People in these uncertain times are depending more than ever for counsel upon their clergymen. Broken homes, marital difficulties, adolescent problems, all are increasing, and from early morning until late at night the minister's telephone is ringing for appointments. . . . Not only overwork, but poor diet also is contributing to the physical breakdown of those in places of responsibility in our churches." Ministers should eat a hearty breakfast because of the uncertainty of their meal hours later in the day and the need for physical strength; they should take more regular exercises; and when illness strikes, they should not struggle back into harness without an adequate period for full convalescence. They should make certain to get enough rest, and to lengthen their periods of rest, as the strains of age come on. . . . "If ministers follow these common sense rules," Dr. Anderson said, "they will greatly lengthen their period of usefulness and avoid the premature breakdowns which are blighting many clerical careers."

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Last November the City Council of Montreal, Canada, passed a by-law requiring stores to close on Roman Catholic holy days, providing a maximum fine of \$40 for each offense or a maximum of two months in jail for proprietors of stores remaining open on Christmas, New Year's, Epiphany, Ascension, All Saints' and Immaculate Conception Days. More than 500 summonses were issued against stores which remained open on Immaculate Conception Day last December 8, and over 200 were charged with remaining open on Ascension Day, May 22. Protestant groups, notably the United Church and the Presbyterian Church, protested. Seven large department stores initiated court action

to have the ordinance declared illegal. Now the Montreal Superior Court has done so, but on the ground that the statute "is of exactly the same nature as if it had related to Sunday observance" and that such laws fall within the legislative powers of the Federal parliament rather than of the province. The city will appeal the case, and the court battles may eventually lead to the Supreme Court of Canada. Judge Arthur I. Smith of the Montreal Superior Court did, however, note that the by-law was directed solely at six holy days of obligation for Roman Catholics, and this convinced the court that its object was to compel the observance of these days (against the contention of the lawyers for the city who denied this, stating that the by-law was meant to secure additional days of rest for store employees). The Judge also cited letters addressed to the Mayor of Montreal by the Archbishop of Montreal and other Catholic leaders which further underscored the religious purpose of the city in passing the by-law.

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The Moscow newspaper *Pravda* reports that the Movement of Atheists in Bulgaria gained 200,000 new members last year, bringing total membership to 1,600,000. The movement arranged 90,000 lectures during the year, which were attended by more than 2,000,000 people. In addition, it sponsored a number of antireligious exhibitions. "Truly good work," said *Pravda*.

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The Board of Education of San Diego, Calif., has decided that public schools of that city shall begin instruction in morals and spiritual values when classes resume in September; this to replace released-time programs previously conducted, but discontinued after court decisions had cast a shadow over the legality of religious training in any way connected with public schools. . . . The program is to embrace: Teaching the importance of religion and of church life in American society; study in the elementary schools of how religious institutions contribute to community life; a 10th-grade experimental course, including one unit designated "Man's Search for Religion"; use of books on comparative religion, with the idea of developing spiritual values, a good character and ethics, and the effectiveness of church and religion in human life; use of a calendar on holy days; use of the Biblical account of the Ten Commandments and simple inspirational Psalms; simple non-sectarian exercises to be held at appropriate times to develop reverence, to include non-sectarian prayers, prayerful songs, inspirational poems and quotations. Children are to be encouraged to maintain

close affiliation with church or synagog.—While it is encouraging to see the growing conviction that it is most difficult to teach morals without religion, we want to see a program constructed on these lines that is satisfactory both to the churches and to the synagogs.

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A proposal for a traveling professor in stewardship to teach at the 10 seminaries of the United Lutheran Church in America was advanced at the eighth annual stewardship conference of the Church, meeting in Minneapolis, Minn. Under the plan, the professor would teach a course in stewardship at each of the seminaries once every three years. This would enable all their ministers to receive special stewardship training. The Lutheran Laymen's Movement for Stewardship, an organization of some 1,100 ULCA laymen who contribute from \$100 to \$1,000 a year, in addition to regular church giving, will be asked to finance the cost of the traveling professor. . . . Speakers at the conference emphasized that stewardship is not just a technique to separate people from their money, but rather a way of life—a man's recognition "that God, besides creating him, has called him to be a priest of his faith, even where he works."

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The chief of Navy chaplains, Rear Adm. Stanton W. Salisbury, told a national convention of Navy Mothers Clubs of America that half again as many persons are "graduated" into civilian society each year from military services as are graduated from universities and similar institutions, and it is one of the big jobs of military chaplains to help prepare servicemen and women "to be able to fight the war of civic righteousness" when they return to civilian life. He pointed out that often the recruits have thrown off restraints, leaving behind the influences that conditioned their lives, and Navy chaplains try to link home and Navy, to "revive in the hearts and minds of the young men and women those things you gave them." He stressed the need for character, "moral firmness that makes you discipline yourself in the terrible moral morass of 1952."

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The Louisiana House of Representatives has unanimously approved a bill which would require all ministers who perform marriage ceremonies to register with parish clerks of courts. The State Health Board asked for the law because it receives over 100 marriage certificates a month with the names of the officiating clergymen illegible, and the Board does not know how to locate them.

A report to the North American Assembly on African Affairs brought by Dr. Ried F. Shields, United Presbyterian Church missionary in Khartoum, the Sudan, said that a modern revival of Islam had resulted from aroused nationalism and political activity, and as a result a clash between Mohammedanism and Christianity is developing all the way across Africa in a strip that extends from Eritrea to Nigeria. Islam, he said, may seem a romantic sleeping giant to movie-conscious Americans, but in reality it is a political-social system of tremendous importance in world affairs, because of its strategic position in an area between the East and the West. "Though Islam's spiritual influence is very little, the system can call forth a blind, fanatical, intolerant devotion from people who know nothing of what it stands for, who ignore its teachings and who are indifferent to its rites." Mission schools and other Christian activities might therefore suffer criticism, opposition, and even vilification; and while the common people would remain friendly to Christians, they would be forced, out of loyalty to Islam, to sever relations with Christian institutions. It is an easy matter to become a Mohammedan, the missionary pointed out. When young North Africans go to Moslem cities to work or attend school, they suffer discrimination and abuse; but if they turn Mohammedan, "the great brotherhood enfolds them," although no change of convictions is involved, no moral precepts are enjoined. Christian work in the Sudan is made difficult by the fact that some pagan tribal chiefs have been "converted" to Mohammedanism and then all their people are thereby claimed as Moslems.

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The Archbishop of Sidney, Australia, Norman Cardinal Gilroy, in an interview in New York, discussed, among other matters, the demands of Australian Catholics for state subsidies for their schools; the reason for that demand was, however, not chiefly a question of economics, that Catholics suffer from double taxation for schools and, as a result, a great financial burden has been placed on them, but primarily because "in justice the nation owes to the Catholic people recognition for their contribution to education and citizenship—a repayment for services rendered to the nation."—If that were granted, what a long list of claimants for state support that would open!

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A high-ranking Communist functionary of Jena University, Mrs. Sonja Eichhofer, has made the demand that Evangelical student groups be banned from East German universities.

A law exempting parochial and other private, non-profit schools from property taxation will go into effect in California on September 22, unless a pending referendum on the matter reverses it. The California and Nevada District of our Synod, at its annual convention in Oakland, went on record in favor of the new law. In the adopted resolution, the delegates declared that the new law is "consistent with Lutheran principles." They said that Lutherans do not demand tax exemption or tax support, but, at the same time, do not consider such exemption or support a violation of the principle of Church-State separation.

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According to a report by the diocese of Muenster, Germany, Roman Catholic parishes in Germany need 2,900 priests. The shortage of priests is said to be due largely to losses in clergy during World War II and to the decreasing number of theology students as a result of the war. Of the 3,496 theology students presently enrolled at West German universities, three fourths come from workers' and farmers' families and only one fourth from upper social levels.

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A rosary device which automatically keeps count of prayers said has been invented by a St. Cloud, Minn., Roman Catholic. He has taken out eight patents on the device; a company has been formed, the Queen of the Rosary foundation, which will see to it that all profits from sales are used for the advancement of Catholic and charitable institutions. They hope to produce 2,400 recorders a day, selling them at \$2.00 each. A religious order has requested 500 of the devices to be smuggled behind the Iron Curtain into Poland.—A new racket for money-raising, and about the ultimate in making prayer mechanical.

## BOOK REVIEW

*All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 South Jefferson Avenue, St. Louis 18, Missouri.*

**DAS ZIEL ALLER DINGE. DAS LETZTE WORT DES ERHOECHTEN AN SEINE ANGEFOECHTENE GEMEINDE. BIBELSTUNDEN UEBER DIE OFFENBARUNG JOHANNIS.** By Hellmuth Frey. Calwer Verlag, Stuttgart, 1951. 256 Seiten. DM 11.80.

This popular exposition of the Apocalypse is from the pen of a Lutheran Old Testament scholar who has written a number of expositions of Old Testament books that are being widely read in German circles. The present book is the ripe fruit of the author's work on the Apocalypse in his Bible classes and pulpits, in the ministry to comrades at the war-front and in prison camp, in the catastrophic period from 1930—1950. Both he and his auditors were victims of the demonic forces graphically described in the pages before us and were sustained by the promises given by the Ascended Victor to His harassed people. No reader of this exposition can miss the warmth and earnestness of true pastoral concern as the writer seeks to draw lessons of admonition and comfort from the revelations given to John with the aim to assure the Church that Christ is the Lord of history, who leads all events to the goal of the New Creation.

While the author is a mild pre-millennialist, this feature is not prominent and does not impair the general usefulness of this book for the reader who does not share the pre-millennial position. As to the structure of the Apocalypse, the author follows, in the main, the "recapitulatory" theory, which sees in the seven groups of visions the same interadventual period illuminated from different points of view. Many readers of this journal will be familiar with this principle of interpretation from Lenski's *Exposition of Revelation*, or from the very valuable book of W. Hendriksen, *More Than Conquerors* (Baker: Grand Rapids). With Frey's book and these two American expositions as aids, our pastors, I feel, would be quite well equipped to present this difficult book in an effective way to their people.

The author writes in a clear, vigorous style. The language should not prove too difficult for our younger pastors who still command a fairly good reading knowledge of German. The reviewer was particularly impressed by the powerful treatment of chapters 12—14; 20:11-15; 21:4-6; 21:9-27 and was happy to note throughout that the writer is not concerned about finding final fulfillment of the prophetic symbols in events of already recorded history, but seeks to uncover the background of his-



torical events in the forces of darkness that wage a losing fight against Christus Victor, in whose hands His people always rest secure, even in persecution and martyrdom, and who triumphantly brings history to God's intended goal.

V. BARTLING

**TWO TREATISES ON THE MEANS OF GRACE.** By Dr. M. Reu. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minn. Brochure. 120 pages, 9 by 6. \$1 net.

This volume offers reprints of two essays by the sainted Dr. M. Reu which are as timely today as when they first were written. In the first, Dr. Reu treats the subject *What is Scripture and How Can We Become Certain of Its Origin?* As in his well-known monograph *Luther and the Scriptures*, so also here the author defends verbal inspiration, though not a mechanical dictation inspiration, so that the Word of God in Scripture is the objective authoritative truth. Of this the believer becomes subjectively sure through the testimony of the Holy Ghost operating in and through the divine Word. In the second essay, *Can We Still Hold to the Lutheran Doctrine of the Lord's Supper?* Dr. Reu defends the Lutheran doctrine of the Real Presence against modern errorists in his usual scholarly way. Since there has been a constant demand for these two treatises, it was well for Augsburg Publishing House to supply them anew in clear and convenient reprints. The volume contains an explanatory "Foreword" by Dr. E. W. Matzner, Wartburg Seminary, and a most helpful bibliography for the study of the two doctrines.

J. T. MUELLER

**PRAYER.** By Karl Barth. Translated by Mrs. Sara F. Terrien. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, Pa. 78 pages, 7×5. \$1.50.

From 1947 to 1949 Dr. Karl Barth delivered a series of lectures in French on prayer as conceived by the Reformers Luther and Calvin, and as we must regard it today in the light of the evangelical Reformation. The lectures were taken down in shorthand by some of his seminar students and are now offered to English-speaking readers in a very facile translation by Mrs. Terrien, wife of Dr. S. L. Terrien, associate professor of Old Testament, Union Theological Seminary, New York. We recommend these talks on prayer, which concern themselves chiefly with an exposition of the Lord's Prayer "according to the Catechisms of the Reformation." Barth, however, reserves the right to inject into the teachings of the Reformers his own ideas, though he usually assimilates thoughts from Luther, Calvin, and especially the Heidelberg Catechism. At times there are emphases which fail to do justice to Luther, as, for example, when he quotes the Wittenberg Reformer as holding the rigid, almost military idea that God commands prayer and so man must obey. This entirely neglects Luther's evangelical approach to prayer. Barth invariably quotes the two chief parts of the Biblical doctrine thus: "the Gospel and the Law," and this not by

accident, but as the reader may judge even from this simple, devotional work, because the Basel professor fails to see the clear and sharp distinction which Luther made between Law and Gospel. Frequently Barth, too, interprets the theology of the Reformers in the light of his own neo-orthodox thought, as when he says that it was the chief question of the Reformers how to have an encounter with God. Luther's great question before his "tower experience" was rather how he might obtain the grace of God and His forgiveness of sins. Sometimes Barth says rather startling things, as when he claims that in the word "Our Father" we pray not merely with the communion of saints, but also with those who do not pray (p. 34). We pray *with* all believers, but *for* unbelievers. Time and again the reader is prompted to ask what Barth really means, as when he says that God is our Father by virtue of this new birth realized at Christmas, on Good Friday, at Easter, and fulfilled at the moment of our Baptism (p. 35). To the reader it appears that Barth in expounding the Second Petition understands by "kingdom" not Christ's Kingdom of Grace, but merely His Kingdom of Glory. Or has he in mind perhaps a sort of Ritschlian kingdom of perfection? Unlike Luther, Barth does not understand by "bread" merely our many earthly needs, but also the spiritual blessings which bread in Scripture signifies; in short, "bread both earthly and celestial" (p. 62). Barth writes: "Far from me be the idea of preaching the devil to you" (p. 73); yet he preaches the devil as a very real and hideous reality. Occasionally one finds real French wit in the book, as when Barth says that the Reformers had no respect for the devil, since he is not very respectable (p. 73). Discriminating Lutheran readers will find Barth's exposition of the Lord's Prayer both interesting and instructive, though they will question many statements. J. T. MUELLER

BEKENNENDE KIRCHE. *Martin Niemoeller zum 60. Geburtstag*. Chr. Kaiser Verlag, Muenchen. 327 pages, 10×7. Bound. M. 13.50.

When German theologians of prominence reach the age of 60 years, their friends usually honor them with a *Festschrift* or dedicatory volume. Martin Niemoeller was one of the Germans who bade defiance to Hitler and one of the framers of the Barmen Confession. Those who are interested in this most important development of religious events in Central Europe will find in this book much that is worth studying. There are essays by Karl Barth, one of the leaders of the defiance group, Eivind Berggrav (Norway), Pierre Maury (France), Ewart E. Turner (America), George K. A. Bell (England), and so forth, not to speak of the many German theologians who are represented here. As one reads these various essays, of greater and lesser length and worth, one realizes that Barmen really represented a confession against the paganism which Hitlerism spread; but one understands, too, why the Lutheran groups, represented in the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany, found this confession

inadequate and emphasized over against it Lutheran thought and theology. The volume is most valuable for college and seminary libraries, as also for the private libraries of pastors who have the money to buy it and the time to peruse its contents. As the title of the book indicates, the essays concern themselves not so much with Niemoeller and his work as rather with the duty of the Church to confess over against infidelity and tyranny.

J. T. MUELLER

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD IN CALVIN'S THEOLOGY. By Edward A. Dowey, Jr. Columbia University Press, New York. 1952. 207 pages, 5½×8. \$3.75.

The main purpose of this book is to present a critical exposition of Calvin's theological epistemology, with specific attention to the basic significance of the *duplex cognitio Domini*. In presenting the twofold knowledge of God, the author follows the order in the *Institutes*, first considering God as the Creator and secondly as the Redeemer in the Person of Christ. In a concluding chapter he shows the relation between this twofold knowledge. As the most recent contribution to a critical and interpretive examination of Calvin's theology this small volume merits the favorable attention of theological students.

L. W. SPITZ

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD. By G. C. Berkouwer. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1952. 294 pages, 5½×8½. \$3.50.

This is the second of Professor Berkouwer's nineteen-volume series on Christian theology to be done into English. It may, according to his own definition of the term, be regarded as his theodicy, or justification, of God's providential rule. Defining theodicy as an attempt to defend God against all complaints or accusations by demonstrating the meaningfulness and purposefulness of God's activity in the world and in human life, he endeavors to prove that in spite of all enigmas and all criticisms God's governing of the world is holy, good, and just. The reader will find, however, that the author, like other dogmatists before him, still leaves a number of enigmas for him to ponder.

The modern attacks on the doctrine of God's providence sufficiently justify the appearance of this volume. Frequent references to other present-day theologians, such as Barth and Brunner, add to its relevancy for contemporary readers. The theological scholar will be interested in discovering to what extent, if at all, the author has been influenced by the men whom he quotes.

Professor Berkouwer does not pretend to supply the reader with a complete logical pattern of the doctrine of Providence. Aware of the enigmas involved, he insists that no logical scheme must ever be allowed to cut short the actual speech of Scripture, not even a scheme deduced from the

eternal decree of God. Granted; but fidelity to the exact words of Scripture need not be incompatible with dogmatical formulations. Of this the author, too, is aware. His own books are the most convincing proof. It is for another reason that he, for instance, rejects so-called "mixed articles" in favor of "pure articles" of faith. On this point many of his fellow dogmaticians disagree with him. In the area of Providence some things, according to Scripture, can be known of God besides the things God has revealed about Himself in His Word (Rom. 1:19-21).

Professor Berkouwer puts a significant question mark after the doctrine of divine concurrence. He disallows the distinction between form and matter according to Bavinck's formulation. The latter explains that man speaks, acts, believes, and it is God alone who lends the sinner all the life and energy that he needs to commit sin; yet, the subject and author of the sin is man, and not God. It is obvious from Scripture that God moves the atom, but He is not the cause of sin. Professor Berkouwer ultimately consigns this entire matter to faith. He says: "Our 'problem' is resolved in our listening to God's revelation." With that every Bible student will agree. But the question still remains: "What has God revealed with regard to His providence and the sinner's sin?"

The publishers are to be commended for making this useful series available to the American reader. L. W. SPITZ

**FAITH AND SANCTIFICATION.** By G. C. Berkouwer. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1952. 193 pages, 5½ by 8½. \$3.00.

This is the first of Dr. Berkouwer's nineteen-volume series in Christian theology to be translated into English. The author occupies the Chair of Systematic Theology at the Free University of Amsterdam. His theology is Reformed. He is a faithful disciple of John Calvin and thoroughly at home in the Reformed confessions, but he desires above all to be regarded as a Biblical scholar. This purpose makes his work of particular value in its criticism of modern less Biblical theologians. Noteworthy is the author's concern for the proper relation between justification and sanctification. "Genuine sanctification," he repeats, "stands or falls with this continued orientation toward justification and the remission of sins." This same interest induces him to describe the progress of sanctification as something vastly different, as it certainly is, from mere moralistic improvement. Not equally successful is his presentation of the Lutheran doctrine regarding the significance of the Law for believers. Just what, for instance, does he mean when he makes Lutherans say: "Faith and love are independent sources of spontaneous activity"? It is the difference between the Reformed and the Lutheran interpretation of Scripture which should keep the reader alert to critical analysis. Dr. Berkouwer's works can be recommended for such a fruitful theological exercise. L. W. SPITZ

LUTHER'S PROGRESS TO THE DIET OF WORMS, 1521. By Gordon Rupp.

A Cloister Press Book. Wilcox & Follett Co., Chicago. 109 pages.

No. 17-1059. \$2.00.

One is tempted to say: Another book on Luther. But it is not just another book on Luther. The author is an Englishman, a minister in the Methodist Church, professor of Church History at Richmond College, a Methodist school of divinity in the University of London. There are many treatises on Luther's life and work of German and Scandinavian, that is, Lutheran origin; others are few in number. It is interesting and valuable to hear the story related by a man of different background and environment. Outstanding is the author's acquaintance with Luther's own writings; most of the pages have numerous footnotes referring to the Weimar Edition of Luther's works, usually citing Luther's own words. There is much evidence of the writer's thorough knowledge of late German and Scandinavian studies. Not that the book offers much that is new to a Luther student; but it is written for English laymen who are not so well versed in the Luther literature of the last 30 to 40 years; and it is written in bold, plain language anyone can understand, a welcome change from much that is offered today. It is true, it is written for the English reader and therefore contains numerous references to English history and literature. — Altogether it is fascinating and stimulating reading. The chapters on Luther's 95 Theses (The Hubbub) and on the Leipzig Debate (Great Argument) are classic and cause a regretful wish in the reader's heart that the other chapters were longer and more detailed. — That is perhaps the only criticism that can be expressed: the brevity of the discussion because of the desire (or necessity?) of condensing the material into 108 pages. The result is that some sections are too brief to be fully appreciated by readers who have not made the story of Luther and the Reformation the object of deeper study. When, e. g., he speaks of the reason why Luther was called back from Wittenberg to Erfurt in 1509 as "an affair of ruffled academic dignity," I'm afraid a good many readers will have to consult Schwiebert *et al* for explanation. Because of this striving for brevity (I do not think that the author deliberately sidesteps the question!) the book makes it appear as though that inner soul struggle for assurance of his salvation began with Luther's entrance into the monastery, when, in fact, it began much earlier and was really the reason for his joining the Augustinians. One would like to quote at length. Dr. Rupp calls attention to the fact that neither historical investigation nor study of Luther's theological development alone will enable us to understand Luther; both are necessary. He has no hope that once for all time he will stop the circulation of "elderly and grubby" libels "that have often been met in the past," though "sooner or later even polemical publicists will tire of rehashing Denifle and Grisar." (I hope he is right!) — At times the nationality of the author shines through. "There could be (in Germany)



no such alliance between royalty and gentry as in England would produce a Reformation Parliament, or between the gentry and the boroughs as could achieve the Elizabethan House of Commons." Poor Germany! But it seems to me the Church fared better in Germany than in the English Reformation! The very first sentence in the book points to a commendable characteristic; Luther is quoted: "I was born at Eisleben and baptized in St. Peter's there. I do not remember this, but I believe my parents and fellow countrymen." The author gives considerable latitude to Luther's humor. — Dr. Rupp thinks that "perhaps too much has been read into Luther's so-called 'Tower Experience' (*Turmerlebnis* — from the room in the monastery at Wittenberg in which, according to the *Table Talk* Luther came to a new understanding of Rom. 1:17)." If he means that the *Turmerlebnis* was not a sort of vision in which in a miraculous way Luther in a moment turned from all-wrong to all-right, we agree. Luther's development was a gradual growth. But somewhere, at some time, there had to come the moment when for the first time the thought came to him to compare the two sections of Rom. 1:17 and so reach the conclusion that the righteousness of God revealed in the Gospel is not His "active" righteousness, but the righteousness "which avails before God" (*die Gerechtigkeit, die vor Gott gilt*), the perfect righteousness of Christ, which comes to us by faith (*per fidem*, Luther says); and that was the *Turmerlebnis*. — And now the oft-repeated regretful criticism. Our author says (p. 41); "It is important to guard against misunderstanding at this point, for some of the wisest scholars have warned us against supposing we are here confronted with some abstract doctrine of the imputation of the merits of Christ like that of some forms of later Lutheran orthodoxy." Do authors think it an insult to Luther to charge him with teaching the vicarious substitutional work of Christ? To delete this blessed doctrine from Luther's works would certainly mean reducing the volume of his writings considerably. Take only one passage, one which Rupp himself cites — if he had only quoted the full context! It reads:

"Cor enim credentis in Christum, si reprehenderit eum et accusaverit eum contra eum testificans de malo opere, mox avertit se et ad Christum convertit dicitque: Hic autem satisfecit, hic iustus est, hic mea defensio, hic pro me mortuus est, hic suam iustitiam meam fecit et meum peccatum suum fecit. Quod si peccatum meum suum fecit, iam ego illud non habeo et sum liber. Si autem iustitiam suam meam fecit, iam iustus ego sum eadem iustitia qua ille. Peccatum autem meum illum non potest absorbere, sed absorbetur in abyso iustitiae eius infinita, cum sit ipse Deus benedictus in saecula." (From Luther's Lectures on Romans, W. Ed. 56, 204.)

Dr. Rupp's little book merits better proofreading; there are a number of printer's errors, only one, however, of any importance, on p. 81; to charge Spalatin with "temerity" would have given Luther an opportunity for one of his good-natured quips!

THEO. HOYER



**THE CHURCH IN COMMUNITY ACTION.** By Harvey Seifert. Abingdon-Cokesbury, Nashville, 1952. 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ ×8, 240 pages. \$2.75.

The book surveys the areas of social and political life into which the Church should extend its concern. Therewith it enters upon scores of moot questions. The reader will ask two especially: 1) In what way does the Church of Jesus Christ bring the dynamic of the Christian Gospel to bear upon men so that they will concern themselves for the welfare of their community and world? 2) Does the Christian, moved by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, make his impact upon his world through his church as an organization, or through his part in community life and government as a Christian citizen? To the first question this book gives little answer. It is chiefly concerned with sketching obstacles, describing areas, and outlining methods of action. The author does not regard the alternative of the second question binding. He regards the chief corporate activity of the church toward community relations to be the educational one. But he sketches broadly the part which Christian citizens play as such in the reach of Christianity into the world. Valuable are the bibliographies for each chapter.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

**HOW TO TALK WITH PEOPLE.** By Irving J. Lee. Harper and Brothers, New York, 1952. 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ ×7 $\frac{3}{8}$ , xiv + 176 pages. \$2.50.

This little book outlines the techniques of group discussion. It reflects the analysis of hundreds of group discussions, chiefly in the field of labor and management relations, which the author, a professor of speech at Northwestern University, attended. The author is swayed by the semantic movement, and some of his analysis is helpful when understood against that background.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

**MARCHING OFF THE MAP.** By Halford E. Luccock. Harper & Brothers, New York, 1952. 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ ×8 $\frac{1}{4}$ , 192 pages. \$2.50.

The noted teacher of preaching at Yale, Simeon Stylites in the *Christian Century*, herewith publishes a volume of twenty-two sermons. In the *Minister's Workshop* has been a stimulus to many preachers, and this volume likewise has its facile and suggestive moments. Dr. Luccock has a staggering facility with literary allusions and quotations. At the level which he chooses to strike he does a finished job. However, that level is strictly a non-theological one, even though the preacher quotes and even uses his texts. His one reference to redemption, on the basis of Job 19, explicitly foregoes any theology of redemption. The closest to a presentation of the Christian message is the sermon "The Christmas Rush." Frequently the content closely approaches a doctrine of humanism. Dr. Luccock is the peer of American pulpit stylists. How we might wish that his utterances carried the Gospel of the Cross with as much charm as they do lesser themes.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

OUR DAILY HOMILY. By F. B. Meyer, D. D. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. Five volumes,  $3\frac{1}{4} \times 5\frac{1}{4}$ , cloth binding, averaging 235 pages. Per set \$4.95.

This is an extensive offering of daily meditations on choice Bible texts similar to our well-known *Portals of Prayer* devotions and covering the entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation. There are nearly 1,200 of these little homilies, by which the author seeks to reach the hearts of the sick, perplexed, and discouraged children of God. A fair sampling of these devotions leads us to state that, without vouching for every statement that is made, much spiritual good can be derived from the prayerful perusal of these little volumes.

O. E. SOHN

MISSION TO AMERICA. By Truman B. Douglass. Friendship Press, 156 Fifth avenue, New York 10, N. Y. 148 pages,  $5 \times 7\frac{1}{4}$ . Cloth \$2.00; paper \$1.25.

Used with proper discernment, this little volume on the stewardship of lay talent can render good service to those pastors in particular the bulk of whose work brings them into missionary contact with the un-churched rather than to deal primarily with an established congregation. Holding that the Church in America must be a missionary church or die, the author portrays many important aspects of American life, such as the vast internal migrations and their effect on our way of life; our changing town-country relations; the meaning of the community spirit; the dilemma of modern suburban life; the church meeting of yesterday, today and tomorrow; and the interlocking of Christian ethics with the principles of business enterprises. There is much in the author's presentation which we may take to heart and translate into action. His strongest emphasis is upon the need of increasing the ranks of informed and responsible churchmen, holding worth-while meetings and increasingly putting the laity to work. There is also a sizable bibliography in this field appended.

O. E. SOHN

SPRINGS OF LIVING WATER. By Carl J. Scherzer. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, Pa. 93 pages,  $5 \times 7\frac{1}{4}$ . \$1.50.

This is a collection of choice Scripture texts, meditations, poems, and prayers for the use of patients as a complement to the bedside visits of their pastor or the hospital chaplain. The author, a hospital chaplain, discusses such items as Christian virtues as well as adverse experiences, such as apprehension, anxiety, pain, and loneliness as these affect hospital patients, offering them encouragement and strength against the ordeal. The book can be used with much profit by intelligent Christians, as it may also serve pastors by suggesting suitable material for bedside visits. Some of the meditations will have to be given a higher Christian content, however, if they are to serve their purpose properly.

O. E. SOHN

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